DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 238 272 FL 014 137

AUTHOR Garfinkel, Alan, Ed.; And Others
TITLE The Foreign Language Classroom: New Techniques. Report of Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.
PUB DATE 83
NOTE 124p.; Papers presented at the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (15th, St. Louis, MO, 1983). For individual papers, see FL 014 138-148.
AVAILABLE FROM National Textbook Company, Lincolnwood, IL ($8.95)
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021) -- Books (010)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Classroom Techniques; *Communicative Competence (Languages); Conference Proceedings; *Cultural Education; Elementary Secondary Education; French; *Microcomputers; Newsletters; *Second Language Instruction; Spanish; *Student Centered Curriculum; Teaching (Occupation)

ABSTRACT

The summary of the 1983 Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages includes these papers: "A Look at Our Profession: Common Concerns, Common Dreams" (Mary Finocchiaro's keynote address to the 1982 Central States Conference); "Traversing the Language 'Gateway': The Passport Lesson" (Dana Carton); "Personal Growth Through Student-Centered Activities" (Barbara Snyder, Carolann DeSelms); "Situations for Communication: Growth in Competence and Confidence" (Ronald W. Walker); "Real Language: A Gateway to Cultural Identification" (Michael D. Oates, D. C. Hawley); "Beyond Reading: Developing Visual Literacy in French" (Steven J. Sacco, Beverly G. Marckel); "The Teaching of Spanish Object Pronouns: A Communicative Approach" (Oscar Ozete); "Applying Microcomputers in the Foreign Language Classroom: Challenges and Opportunities" (Millie Mellgren); "Foreign Language Arts in the Grades: A Conceptual Approach (F.L.A.G.)" (Rosemarie A. Benya, Bettye L. Myer); "Teaching Foreign Language in Style: Identifying and Accommodating Learner Needs" (Robert L. Ballinger, Virginia S. Ballinger); "The Foreign Language Newsletter: Function, Value, and Techniques" (Wynona H. Wilkins). (MSE)

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CENTRAL STATES

Report of Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

ED238272 - ED238283

# The Foreign Language Classroom: New Techni

Edited by
Alan Garfinkel

Contributors
Mary Finocchiaro
Dana Carton
Barbara Snyder
Carolann DeSelms
Ronald W. Walk
Michael D. Oates
D. C. Hawley
Steven J. Sacco
Beverly G. Marckel
Oscar Ozete
Millie Mellgren
Rosemarie A. Benya
Bettye L. Myer
Robert L. Ballinger
Virginia S. Ballinger
Wynona H. Wilkins

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FL014137

# The Foreign Language Classroom: New Techniques

Edited by

Alan Garfinkel
Purdue University

Co-Editors

Sharyl L. Mitchell
Hobart Senior High School
Hobart, Indiana

Loranna M. Moody
Purdue University

1-84-45
FL014137

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# In Memoriam

The Board of Directors
of the Central States Conference
on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
dedicates this volume to
the memory of our valued colleague,
**Madeline Cooke.**
Her passing takes from us
the comfort of having a friend
who always put the interest
of others
ahead of her own.

# Preface

The theme of the 1983 Central States Conference, "Language Learning: Gateway for Growth," recognizes the past and anticipates the future of the profession. This year's meeting marks the fifteenth anniversary of the Conference as well as a return to St. Louis after an eight-year absence. The program is a living definition of growth as perceived by all the conference participants. Featuring seventeen conference workshops, over seventy individual presentations, three general sessions keynoted by persons of national prominence, and the conferring of the Paul Simon Award (for the promotion of language and international studies) by the person in whose honor it is named, this program symbolizes the growth of the Conference during the past fifteen years.

For many of the 1,000 participants, "growth" is defined in professional terms. We foreign language teachers and those of us who teach English to speakers of other languages are observing an ever increasing potential for language instruction. Both the areas and the levels of this professional expansion are diverse, ranging from the preschool child to the retired adult and from the individual seeking personal enhancement to the highly skilled specialist with specific needs for additional language learning.

Others define "growth" in personal terms for the learner. The individual who learns to understand and use the language of another is also increasing the likelihood of understanding and appreciating that other person's attitudes and behaviors. In the classroom and beyond, language learning carries with it the benefits of cultural enrichment for the learner.

Still others define "growth" in personal terms for the teacher. In addition to the rewards of knowing we have been effective, there await the challenges posed by the broadening perimeters of our profession and the apparently limitless promises of the computer age. What we teach and the ways we teach constantly need our evaluation, our modification, and our articulation.

Finally, merely being at a professional meeting with the scope and purpose of the Central States Conference gives to most the sense that

"growth" is not always tangible and definable, but rather a positive feeling realized through professional, social, and personal encounters with one's colleagues.

The 1983 Conference seeks to carry on the fine tradition established during the past fifteen years.

Nile D. Vernon
*1983 Program Chairperson*

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# Introduction

**Alan Garfinkel**
**Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana**

In 1980, the United States Postal Service honored American education with a stamp bearing the legend "Learning never ends" and a reproduction of Josef Alber's painting "Homage to the Square: Glow." The reproduction features sets of squares, one inside the next, that give the impression of continuing endlessly and, in combination with the legend, it illustrates an important concept in American education—the notion that learning is never complete. Many people have a strong tendency to label and categorize that leads some to falsely assume that a label, "major in foreign languages," for example, indicates the completion of learning. The label may indicate a certain number of hours spent in a classroom. However, it does not necessarily indicate that learning has ended. It may, in fact, have just begun. In recent years, American education in general and the language field in particular have paid progressively more attention to the continuing nature of learning. By dedicating its 1983 meeting to the theme of growth in all its forms, The Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages is showing how the continuing nature of education is being emphasized in the Central States region. In March, 1983, approximately eighty presenters and nearly a thousand conferees gathered in St. Louis, Missouri for sessions that emphasized growth of all kinds, ranging from the growth experienced by a youthful student who studies language for a short time and discovers that it is something of personal value, to that of the teacher who, after many courses and subsequent degrees, finds pleasure in discovering a new way to present one skill or another likely to make language more interesting to students.

This volume offers a compact summary of the 1983 Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, beginning with a base point taken from the 1982 meeting. That base point is an incisive and comprehensive picture of the state of the art of language teaching by a well established leader in our field, Mary Finocchiaro. The directions

subsequently taken by other leaders of our field show that professional growth in our field is moving in the direction set for us by Finocchiaro and others. Finocchiaro called our attention particularly to language taught for specific purposes, and the contents of this volume lead one to see that the 1983 conference exhibits a markedly strong emphasis on just that kind of teaching.

The next four articles of this volume are related to teaching for communicative purposes. Dana Carton uses the theme of travel as a background for the first 1983 article in the volume. Here we learn the techniques of using interviews and application procedures in the context of passports to teach all the basic language skills. Barbara Snyder and Carolann DeSelms show how communicative teaching leads to growth in language skill and, at the same time, growth in the self-concept that is essential to any kind of learning. Ronald W. Walker continues the theme of language for special purposes by demonstrating techniques for motivating reading and causing progress in one language skill to support and generate progress in another. He uses partly fictional United Nations Security Council meetings and real news reportage as the media for achievement in language learning. Michael D. Oates and D. C. Hawley give yet another view of teaching language for communication. They provide ideas for specific activities including an extracurricular language weekend and native speaker interviews.

Steven J. Sacco and Beverly G. Marckel are as much concerned with communication and specific purpose as their colleagues, but their focus is exclusively on the reading skill. They show how to provide for student growth in language learning by using such realistic materials as postcards and newspaper clippings to supplement or even supplant textbook-oriented reading materials.

Oscar Ozete's contribution is more specialized than most of the other papers in the volume. It specifies one point in Spanish grammar and provides an analysis of its treatment by textbooks, accompanied by a synthesis of recommended classroom procedures.

No fortune-teller is required to determine that computer assisted instruction is an arena for present and future growth in our field. Millie Mellgren points out the challenges that this new medium of instruction issues and the opportunities it offers.

Rosemarie A. Benya and Bettye L. Myer offer a different approach

to the planning of curriculum for elementary school language teaching. They recommend a program that integrates language learning, concept development, and cross-cultural understanding as integral parts of a language program.

Robert L. Ballinger and Virginia S. Ballinger are experienced high school teachers. Like so many others, they recommend individualized teaching. However, they do so in the light of their own classroom experiences, making suggestions for identifying and accommodating learner needs without forgetting teacher needs.

Wynona H. Wilkins presents some advice for those who would establish another of the country's most widespread vehicles for professional growth, the statewide foreign language newsletter. As editor of *FLAND News*, one of the best known of such newsletters, she offers experience and practical advice to future newsletter editors who have an interest in carrying on the tradition of service and information she has established.

The papers collected in this volume provide a wide assortment of views on growth for teachers and learners. They deal with all the basic language skills and the teaching of culture. They show that the language classroom is just what the 1983 Conference theme calls it: A Gateway to Growth.

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# 1
# A Look at Our Profession:
## Common Concerns, Common Dreams

**Mary Finocchiaro***
**U.S. Embassy, Rome, Italy**

As many of you know, I taught French for eight years in the New York City high schools before being catapulted into an ESL program. At that time--I'm talking about 1940—one taught ESL only if foreign language assignments were not available. I received the assignment because I was willing to take a class—euphemistically labeled an adjustment class—in which there were young men from nineteen different ethnic backgrounds who understood no English, as well as ten functionally illiterate American native speakers. All had been in jail a minimum of three times.

I managed to survive and was glad, for during the experience I had learned several important truths:

1. Teaching foreign languages had allowed me to slip—without change of approach or method—into the teaching of English as a second language.
2. The awareness and satisfaction of the students' basic human needs of security and self-esteem were a prerequisite to their desire to acquire knowledge.
3. A knowledge and judicious use of the students' native language facilitated comprehension and learning.
4. Most important of all, making the students feel loved and respected—despite their personal problems and their anger at socie-

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*Keynote address, Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Louisville, Kentucky, April 22-24, 1982 (Theme: ESL and the Foreign Language Teacher). Dr. Finocchiaro is Professor Emeritus at The City College of New York and is now a special consultant on ESL to the U.S. Embassy in Rome.

ty—was the principal factor in engendering and sustaining motivation.

One other mind-boggling insight came out of my experience: I realized that foreign language teachers, for whom there were few openings at that time, could be gainfully employed due to the ever-increasing demand for ESL programs and could make a major contribution to the emerging field. While I did not hesitate to say to anyone who would listen that foreign language teachers should have a pivotal role in ESL programs, only in rare instances did perceptive school principals or college heads utilize the expertise and special skills of foreign language teachers.

For nearly thirty years, organizations such as the MLA and NCTE resisted all attempts at calling joint meetings. It was in about 1971 that ACTFL devoted several sections of their annual meeting to the very obvious similarities between teaching ESL and foreign languages. On the local level, the situation was even more hopeless. Boards of education insisted, for example, that programs for nonnative speakers of English be organized by heads of the English department. The truth is that being a native speaker of English or a teacher of English has never qualified anyone to teach ESL unless the person has made a conscious study of the English language system and has acquired the skills of teaching a foreign language and culture.

I need not tell the members of this audience that the results of this policy were tragic. Thousands of Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Cubans, and others were not placed in appropriate classes, since few people in the English department were available to translate records from the students' homeland; to interpret the school programs there; to interview youngsters and parents; to learn about their educational and cultural backgrounds; to prepare curricula and materials; to help plan admission and achievement tests; or to provide services and programs that would have given the newcomers the opportunity to enter the mainstream of the school and to enjoy a mutually accepting relationship between themselves and established community members. In those early years of ESL teaching, only foreign language teachers were endowed with the insights, the knowledge, and the skills to attain such goals. The hostility which often existed between immigrant groups and other community members could have been avoided with the types of communitywide programs with which foreign language teachers had been familiar for years.

ESL researchers and teachers today are rediscovering—many years too late—some of the approaches and techniques that foreign language teachers have used for decades, if not for centuries. I am embarrassed when people in Italy or other countries rush up to me joyfully to describe what they consider innovative techniques and experiments that foreign language teachers knew about and practiced years ago. Among these are the direct methods, the Gouin series, the language experience approach, the inductive approach to grammatical understanding, and the so-called cognitive code theory in current terminology, to name only a few. Worse, perhaps, than the results of the lack of awareness of appropriate techniques was the fact that learners in ESL programs were often made to feel that they had no culture and that their native language was something to be put aside and forgotten during the school days. For years, ESL research studies underscored the need for relevance and timeliness in teaching but—by and large—ignored the timeless, universal values that foreign language teachers had learned about along with the literature, language, and cultural insights they had acquired in order to practice the profession of foreign language teaching.

In these introductory remarks I have felt compelled to deplore the fact that few have stressed the need for what should have been a necessary and beneficial dialogue between the FL and ESL/EFL professions. I must congratulate you most sincerely for the initiative you have taken at this Conference. Now I should like us to take a brief look at what I see as the present state of our joint profession, the concerns and problems, the myths and the realities, the dreams and hopes for the future.

## Concerns and Realities

While numerous ideas and hypotheses are surfacing in many corners of the world (I have just participated in seminars in five European and African countries and have found that they too harbor similar doubts and controversies), I feel at the present time that we are at the crossroads with only two or three paths that seem to be worth exploring. It is a time when books, articles, and conference themes suggest dichotomies in theories as well as opposition to some of the intuitive, eclectic, sometimes traditional practices that teachers find effective in their classrooms. Too many assumptions are emerging, some old but garbed in new raiment and some

which cannot help but elicit the comment, "But the emperor is not wearing any clothes."

I am concerned that there is no strong linguistic theory to put in the place of the structural emphasis which characterized the years from the late 1940s to the late 1960s. Neither is there a viable psychological theory to fill the void left by Chomsky's demolition of Skinner's stimulus-response theory.

Furthermore, some of the new methodologies advocated today are not feasible in normal classrooms and teaching situations and do not specify a period of time for the attainment of communicative competence, the primary objective of today's foreign language and ESL programs. We will have to wait until some of the methodologies are embodied in a complete curriculum before we decide to adopt approaches like Suggestopedia, The Silent Way, Total Physical Response, and others. I would suggest, however, that within these approaches we experiment with those techniques which we find interesting and which we could add to the strategies we already use.

Teachers are asking numerous valid questions that require further research and experimentation as well as collaboration between classroom teachers and researchers. Among these are: Should the native language of the student be used in teaching a second or third language? Should we insist on mastery rather than on a potential ability within competence and performance which the student can acquire gradually in a spiral approach as he or she proceeds through the program? When should reading be started, long after speaking has been introduced or early in the course as some are advocating today? Should curricula for teaching language for special purposes contain a basic corpus of material before technical, vocational, or professional terms are introduced? Do they really differ from programs that teach language for academic purposes? Several other concerns come immediately to mind, particularly as I think of countries abroad.

Some university courses do not offer pre-service teacher training, so that students never have the opportunity to learn about methodology, sociology, psychology, and all other enabling sciences. Even when offered, the university professor may never have spent any time in a secondary classroom either observing or teaching. Neither are courses often given in the language the students are going to teach. They are given—except in rare instances—in the teachers' native language.

Also, research studies often do not seem to have the benefit of the collaboration of classroom teachers (those on the firing line) who will later be asked to implement the results of the research. Moreover, abstract and esoteric terms are used in reporting the research, which make it impossible or difficult for teachers and the lay public to understand the research findings. Even more detrimental, both here and abroad, is that much research is based on the study of one or two cases in one or two situations and then immediately rushed into print only to be revised six months later based on still another limited research study.

Classroom texts also do not seem to have the benefit of the collaboration of classroom teachers. The age level for which the text will be suitable is seldom specified. Exercises contain sentences given in random order so that teachers are often forced to renumber the sentences and to review them several times when students are asked to go to the language laboratory as a follow-up activity. The tasks and activities suggested for practice are not feasible in many areas where appropriate resources are lacking in the community.

The most important problem that I see is that there has been a singular lack of recognition of classroom teachers' efforts except in a few language teachers' associations which honor teachers with awards and incentives. Irresponsible statements appear in the press and in articles and journals, which humiliate teachers. The demands made on teachers are unrealistic in many of the difficult situations in which teaching takes place. The insistence on teacher accountability, teacher behaviors, and the intimidating interaction analysis grids of the 70s were demotivating to teachers and, therefore, to learners. The truth is that the teacher is the crucial variable in the learning and teaching process.

Let me turn now to some truths which will elaborate on some of the points above and which I would like to share with you.

All of us should become deeply aware of four essential characteristics that are the hallmarks of superior teachers. All begin with the letter *C*.

First, a **commitment** to the profession. It is obvious that you have that. Your presence at the Conference, your warm and pertinent involvement, and your attendance at the workshop sessions indicate that you have a strong commitment to your profession and that you wish to continue to keep abreast of changes in it.

Second, the **conviction** that all normal human beings can learn. Some

will need more time. Some will need to use a different modality. Some will learn better by looking at a printed page while listening to a tape or to a teacher. Others will learn by taking notes on the material read.

Third, the **courage** to discard nonproductive teaching strategies which are not in harmony with the expectations of the community in which we teach, with our students' learning styles and rhythms, and with our teaching personalities.

Finally, a corollary to that: the **confidence** in ourselves to develop the strengths and capacities that each of us has within ourself. These may not be similar to the teacher's next door, nor should they necessarily be. Our use of our potential capacities will enable us to teach more effectively and efficiently and to ensure student learning.

The following credo has vast implications for each of us: While we can describe the teaching process in great detail, no one has ever been able to describe the learning process. No one really knows how human beings learn. There are numerous hypotheses, of course, but none has been proven conclusively. Several assumptions have sprung up in the last twenty years. They have been designed to take the place of the ill-fated audiolingual method. Alas, some are strategies which were used centuries or decades ago and which have resurfaced under new names. There are also more recent theories about the functions of the left and right sides of the brain. Chomsky, as you may recall, hypothesized that all human beings are born with an LAD (language acquisition device). Chomsky, however, was talking about learning or acquiring one's native language. He stated categorically that his hypothesis had no relevance to second or foreign language learning. Whether this is true or not, however, not enough was said or written about the activation of the LAD. What factors are involved which the classroom teacher might use? Should there be, for example, a variety of stimuli, extensive use of the students' learning environment, immersion in the language and culture of the target language?

We should not be impressed by slogans or climb on the bandwagon of the dichotomies and oppositions that spring up periodically in journals or texts. There should never be an either/or decision about educational or linguistic theories or strategies. For example, the cognitive-code approach to the learning of grammar (the time-honored deductive approach to presentation and practice) should not be opposed to the habit-formation theory. The two are extensions of one another, and both are necessary.

Accuracy should not be opposed to fluency. Everyone needs to be fluent; those who wish to use the language professionally as teachers, broadcasters, or writers require absolute accuracy. Language learning (the formal learning that takes place in the classroom) should not be opposed to language acquisition (the language one learns through internalizing stimuli from the environment). Integrative motivation (the desire to participate in the target language community) should not be opposed to instrumental motivation (the desire to learn the foreign language in order to get good grades or to enter a profession or vocation where the language is needed to aspire to a better paying job). I could continue with further oppositions on which pages of print are spent to the confusion of classroom teachers who are becoming more and more frustrated by the continual swing of the pendulum.

We must distinguish between teaching and testing, between the teachers' role and responsibility and that of the students. I am becoming a little impatient with the talks and articles that recommend that the teachers stand aside and turn over to the students the responsibility for learning reading, writing, grammar, or whatever. Should not our decision depend on the age of the learners, their educational backgrounds, their language levels (both competence and performance in the native language and the foreign language), and their immediate communicative needs? Do they plan, for example, to migrate to the target language country? Are they applying for admission to a university where they will need the target language to get into the mainstream?

While evaluations of our students' achievement, our curriculum, our texts, and our teaching strategies are important, it is more essential that we teach in order to facilitate student learning. Evaluation can be undertaken when we are sure that we have taught the portions of the language and cultural system to be tested thoroughly enough so that students can experience success in any formative or summative test. By the same token, learners should not be asked to go home and read the next two or three pages or to write a free composition unless they have been thoroughly prepared in class through such measures as a discussion of the topic, help with the lexical items and the cultural allusions, and a careful explanation of the tasks and activities to be performed.

To conclude this all too brief listing, our methods should be eclectic but *not* haphazard or random. The teacher should select from a number

of current or traditional methods of presentation and practice which can be integrated into a coherent and logical whole and—please allow me to repeat—which are in consonance with the teacher's personality, the students' learning styles and rhythms, and board of education or community demands.

Translation (the use of the native language and the emphasis on the students' native culture) has again become fashionable. What could be more logical? Our students do not come to us as *tabulae rasae*. They come with a perfectly adequate linguistic and cultural background, which has served as a symbol of identity with their families and community since birth.

## A Possible Approach

Having touched on some myths and realities, I should like to turn now to the characteristics of a functional-notional approach, because I feel it embodies many valid sociological and psycholinguistic principles. Unfortunately, misunderstandings have arisen about this particular communicative approach. Let me assure you, for example, that grammar is *not* "out," and that reading and writing are integral parts of the approach. It is now being used at all levels of the school system and in the teaching of numerous foreign languages.

Without wishing to proselytize, I feel that the functional-notional approach holds great promise. It leads to communicative competence from the very first day. It recommends the use of the spiral approach in presentation and practice. As Figures 1–4 show, it integrates *functions* (the purposes for which human beings use language), all the elements in the *situation* (people, place, time, topic), the *specific notions* (the lexical items needed to complete the function in the majority of speech acts), semantic theory, and humanistic techniques. It includes structure and notions. It emphasizes the fact that the language used must be appropriate in the social situation in which the speech act is taking place. Even more importantly, it stresses that content and methodology must satisfy the basic, universal human needs recognized by all psychologists: the need for security, a sense of belonging, identity, self-esteem, and self-realization.

And now, in conclusion, what do I feel about the 80s? I entertain four hopes and dreams for the future.

**Figure 1**[1]
Sociocultural Themes

The individual learner
The classroom and school
The home and family
The community of the home and school
The wider community (town or city)
The native country
The target-language country
The world

**Figure 2**[1]
A Structural Topic
(Personal Pronouns)

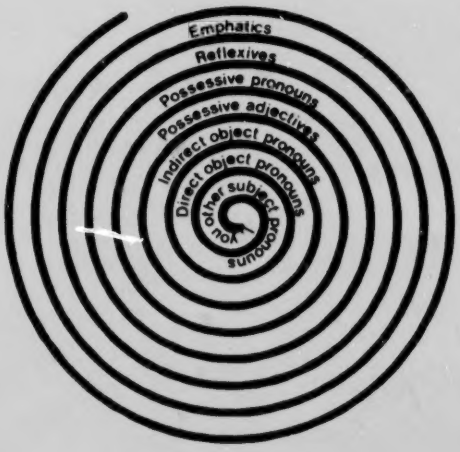

**Figure 3**
Elements in a Communicative Approach

| *Functions* | *Situations* | *Specific Notions* |
|---|---|---|
| (Purposes or Intentions) | People (sex, age, status, role, personality, dialect, gestures, presuppositions, shared experiences) | Nouns<br>Verbs<br>Adjectives<br>Adverbs<br>Structure words<br>Idioms |
| Personal | | |
| Interpersonal | Place | |
| Directive | Time | |
| Referential | Theme (Topic) | |
| Imaginative | registers | |
| and<br>Formulas or Communicative Expression | col; informal-formal; etc. | code switching |
| | | Exponents |

First, I would like to see the communicative or the functional-notional approach taken into serious consideration by members of the ESL and foreign language professions, but adapted wherever necessary.

Second, I would like education courses (pedagogy, methodology) raised to the level of a respectable science at the university level. Teaching *can* be described and there is no reason why research in many of the controversial facets of the teaching process cannot be made the subject of reliable experimentation.

Also, more studies should be undertaken related to the effects of personality variables of learners on language acquisition. Learning and teaching strategies could then be devised so that personality traits can be matched, where feasible, to individual, group, and even to class-wide activities. There has been too much misunderstanding about the definition of motivation and about its importance in language learning and teaching.

Finally, schools should be even more responsive than they are today to the problems and hopes of minority groups. We have come a long way in the last century, but not nearly far enough. Unless we can give minority group youngsters and adults the feeling that we are doing everything

## Figure 4[1]
## Planning the Units

| *Unit* | *Date* | *Title and Function* | *Situation* | *Formulas* | *Structures* | *Nouns* | *Verbs* | *Adj.* | *Adv.* | *Misc.* | *Activities* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| X | 2/4 | Apologizing | Cinema (asking someone to change seats) | Excuse me. Would you mind. . . ? I'm very grateful. | V + *ing* | seat place friend | move change | | | | Dialogue study Role play Expanding sentences Paired practice |
| XI | 2/11 | Apologizing | Department store (returning something) | I'm sorry. Would it be possible. . . ? | Simple past Present perfect | shirt | buy wear | small | too | dates | Aural comprehension Indirect speech Changing register |
| XIV | 3/15 | Requesting directions | At the bus stop | I beg your pardon. Could you tell me. . . ? | Interrogatives (simple present) Modal—*must* | names of places | must get to get off take | | how where | numbers | Reading followed by questions and answers Cloze procedures Dictation |
| XVI | 3/25 | Asking for information | In a post office | Excuse me. Where would I find. . . ? | Modal—*can* | stamps saving account | sell buy open | | | | Expanding sentences of previous dialogues Role playing with these |
| XVIII | 4/5 | Expressing frustration | Home (dinner guests late) | How inconsiderate! Why couldn't they have telephoned? | be + *Ved* It's (time) | food dessert roast | ruin spoil serve | late | so | time & numbers | Any of the above Dicto-comp |
| XX | 4/25 | Requesting directions | Gas station | I beg your pardon. How would I. . . ? | Imperatives (affirmative) (negative) *tell. . .to* | auto-route traffic light | reach get on turn off say tell | | | ordinal numbers | Any of the above Reported speech (e.g., car passenger wants to know what attendant has said) |

**Notes**

Some of the structures may be:

*a.* taught for receptive use only.
*b.* presented for the first time.
*c.* reintroduced after having been taught earlier.

It is desirable to indicate on the right side of the chart several of the major learning activities the students engaged in within the unit. (You should also list these activities under the dialogues in a separate notebook.) Nearly every activity suggested can be engaged in within each unit.

possible to satisfy the human needs *they* consider basic to their well-being, they will never feel that we are genuinely attempting to facilitate their integration into society. I am aware that foreign language teachers cannot accomplish this task alone, but we can and should be in the vanguard of an undertaking of such crucial importance to human beings and to society.

Our greatest hope, it seems to me, lies in the emerging concept of global education. It transcends the narrow concept of biculturalism and even that of cultural pluralism. Global education expands and extends cultural pluralism. It not only focuses on the development of cross-cultural awareness and a spirit of kinship with other peoples, but also enables students to analyze and suggest further measures for using and sharing the world's resources. In the global education program envisaged today, students will be helped to understand.

We language teachers are in a favored position. Everyone in our profession, by attitude and training, possesses the key to bring such communication and communion about. Let us continue not only to use the key ourselves, but also to pass it on to interested persons in other fields who have similar yearnings.

**Notes**

1. From Finocchiaro, "The English Teaching Forum," the International Communication Agency, English Teaching Division, Washington D.C., April 1979.

ED238274

# 2
# Traversing the Language "Gateway":
## The Passport Lesson

**Dana Carton**
**The American University**

"Using Forms as Springboards for Conversation in the Foreign Language Classroom," a presentation at the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages at St. Louis, MO, March 24–26, 1983, presented a variety of target-language forms to be used as catalysts for personalized student interaction in the language classroom. These forms, all requiring that students furnish biographical information, included such typical standardized documents as driver's licenses, disembarkation cards, hotel registration forms, job applications, personal identification papers, and so on. The following paper, however, is limited to the description of one specific form and its effective utilization in the language classroom: the passport.

Facsimile passports may be prepared in class by students as an effective means of introducing some practical conversational vocabulary in the target language. The following suggestions will assure all class members the greatest contact with both the spoken and written language during the creation and subsequent in-class employment of such passports.

Figure 1 shows a sample passport format that can be reproduced in the target language.

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For classroom purposes, experience has shown that it is generally best to avoid listing such directly personal items as height, weight, or distinguishing physical signs, even though these particular entries are found on many authentic passports.

The vocabulary and structures needed for passport completion can be introduced by a brief conversational period in which students are asked about themselves: What is your last name? Your first name? Do you have

**Figure 1**
Sample Passport Format[1]

Photograph

Name:

Sex:

Date of Birth:

Place of Birth:

Nationality:

Color of Eyes:

Color of Hair:

Occupation:

Address:

Date of Issuance:

Expiration Date:

Passport Number:

Signature of Bearer:

a nickname? When and where were you born? What is your nationality? What color are your eyes and your hair? What is your occupation? Where do you live? Student replies to such personalized questions will be chosen from vocabulary lists supplied by the instructor. These lists may be prepared ahead of time and distributed on the day of class, or the blackboard may be used for this purpose.

A rapid introduction or review of the alphabet in the target language at this time will allow students to clarify their responses to such questions as "What is your name?" and "Where do you live?" A variety of related grammatical points may also be profitably covered during this introductory period; for example: rules for adjective agreement and placement, correct utilization of numbers, formation of dates, interrogatives, and prepositions with geographical place names. Such relevant explanations will permit even beginning students to respond fully and accurately to the suggested interrogations.

After this introduction, students are ready to prepare their passports. All class members should be assigned partners. Duplicated passport forms, prepared ahead of time by the instructor, may be distributed to the class. As an alternative, students may be asked to design their own passports. In this case, a sample diagram drawn on the board will provide a useful visual aid. Students will complete these passports for one another. They will do so by asking their partners appropriate questions in the target language to elicit the requisite information. The personal information obtained in this conversational fashion will be noted down in the respective blanks. During this period, students should be encouraged to ask one another in the target language: "Excuse me. Could you spell that, please?" "I'm sorry. Could you repeat that, please?" "Could you speak more slowly, please?" "Is this correct?" Such repeated requests for clarification and verification will provide a spontaneous and beneficial form of oral-aural drill throughout the course of this exercise.

Depending upon the particular student audience involved, certain modifications may enhance the overall effectiveness of this exercise. For example, when using this activity with younger students, the question "What would you like to be?" may be profitably substituted for "What is your profession?" This substitution will broaden the range of vocabulary introduced as students complete the blank following "Occupation." Or, the inquiry "What is your national origin?", rather than "What is your

nationality?", will similarly evoke a wider range of lexical responses to complete the entry marked "Nationality." For the sake of exposure to a broad spectrum of adjectives of nationality in the target language, students may well be encouraged to avoid giving simply "American" as a response here, and, instead, to make their individual answers as complete as possible by tracing their ancestral roots in depth. In continuing education classrooms, substituting the more discrete "When is your birthday?" for "What is your date of birth?" will avoid any possible embarrassment involved with revealing one's age. In this particular setting, furthermore, the additional passport inclusions of "Wife/Husband" and "Minors" may also be used. The appropriate conversational interrogations would then be incorporated: "Are you married?" "What is your husband's (wife's) name?" "Do you have any children?" "How many?" "What are their names?" "When were they born?"

The blanks following "Date of Issuance" and "Expiration Date" will be filled in by the date this lesson is used in class and another one five years thence. To assign a "Passport Number," students may ask their partners for their social security or telephone number, thereby incorporating some additional practice with numbers.

Once all the necessary information has been noted, students will sketch rough representations of their partners in the boxes labeled "photograph." Such sketches will invariably evoke amused reactions from both partners.

As a final step, students will now present their respective partners with the completed passports. They will use the target language to request verification of all information noted ("Is this all correct?") and to request a formalized approval by adding their signatures ("Sign here, please.").

The completed passports can now provide the basis for some individualized conversation in the classroom. Students may be assigned new partners or be placed into groups of three or four. The range and scope of the ensuing conversations will depend upon the particular class level in question. Students in beginning classes will generally have to limit themselves to asking each other only those inquiries introduced during the earlier portions of the lesson. Rotation of partners will allow students to hear a wider range of possible responses to these particular inquiries. This procedure will provide some sustained practice in asking and responding to these basic interrogations. In more advanced classes, students will also

employ these same basic queries. In this setting, however, the overall vocabulary range may be broadened by expanding upon the general themes of the day. For example, students may ask each other additional questions such as: "Do you have a passport?" "Where have you traveled?" "When?" "With whom?" "Where would you like to travel?" "Why?"

During this period of individualized conversation, the instructor may choose to circulate around the classroom, generally overseeing the proceedings and assuring a smoothly flowing and productive activity. Students may be called upon at this time to recapitulate any information they may have learned about one another. For example: "When is (your partner's) birthday?" "His (her) birthday is December fifth." "Where was (your partner) born?" "He (she) was born in Providence, Rhode Island." If any student finds that he or she simply cannot remember a particular item of information about a classmate, that student should be warmly encouraged to ask the specific question once again. Reassurance and encouragement are essential at this time. Students should be told that such constructive repetition will provide some valuable drill on the given vocabulary. This orientation will successfully avoid any possible student embarrassment at memory lapse, while reinforcing a positive learning atmosphere.

The pedagogical value of these passports need not expire at the end of this particular class period. The completed forms may be retained, either by the instructor or by students, to be used again at a later date as functional props in classroom simulations of various real-life experiences such as going through customs, checking into a hotel, picking up mail at a post office, cashing a check, paying for merchandise, obtaining a visa, procuring medical assistance at a hospital, seeking employment, and so on. Students will greatly enjoy using such documents as "proof of identity" in these realistic classroom activities.[2]

The passport activity described here creates a unique classroom opportunity for the immediate utilization of the target language in a directly personalized context. It is extremely flexible in nature, lending itself to use in a variety of instructional settings from high school through university and adult education, and with any target language, including ESL. It may be employed at any level of language study, from beginning through advanced. Modifications necessary for specific audiences have been suggested when applicable.

The passport lesson is structured as a self-contained entity, presenting all necessary vocabulary and structures for its successful functioning within the unit itself. Consequently, it may be employed profitably at any time during the language program to reinforce a particular aspect of the established curriculum or to introduce some eminently practical, conversational vocabulary. No matter when the passport lesson is used, it will provide a stimulating and motivational change of pace in the second language classroom.

**Notes**

1. Included here are equivalent passport terms in some commonly taught languages.
   *French (France)*: Passeport français. Nom du titulaire. Prénoms. Sexe. Numéro du passeport. Etat civil (marié, divorcé, veuf, célibataire). Lieu et date de naissance. Profession. Nationalité. Domicile ou résidence principale. Adresse du titulaire. Signalement—Taille. Yeux. Cheveux. Signes particuliers. Photographie. Mineurs (nom, prénoms, date de naissance). Fait à . . . le . . . Signature du titulaire. Passeport delivré le . . . Date d'expiration/Durée de validité.
   *German (Federal Republic of Germany)*: Reisepass. Passnummer. Name des Passinhabers. Vornamen. (Mädchennamen) Geburtsdatum. Geburtsort. Genaue Anschrift. Wohnort. Besondere Kennzeichen. Beruf. Farbe der Augen. Grösse. Kinder unter 16 Jahren (Name, Geburtsdatum, Geschlecht). Ausländermeldungsnummer. Staatsangehörigkeit. Familienstand (ledig, verheiratet, geschieden, verwitwet). Ort und Datum. Unterschrift des Passinhabers. Lichtbild. Dieser Pass Wird Ungültig an . . . Ausgestellt.
   *Spanish (Spain)*: Pasaporte. Número. Apellidos del titular. Nombre. Nacionalidad. País, lugar y fecha de nacimiento. Estado civil. Profesión. Ocupación actual. Domicilio. Expedido en . . . por . . . Fecha de expedición. Válido hasta . . . Firma. Fotografía.
   *Spanish (Mexico)*: Pasaporte. Número. Nombre(s) del titular. Apellido paterno. Apellido materno o del esposo. Lugar y fecha de nacimiento. Ocupación y profesión. Estado civil. Domicilio. Dirección. Filiación. Estatura. Edad. Pelo. Ojos. Señas particulares. Nacionalidad. En caso de accidente o fallecimiento se dará aviso a . . . Lugar de expedición a . . . de . . . Firma. Expedido el . . . Expira el . . . Fotografía. Impresión dactilar, pulgar derecho.
   *Portuguese (Portugal)*: Número do passaporte. Nome do portador. Nacionalidade. Identificação. Estado civil. Profissão. Local e data do nascimento. Residente em. Residência. Fotografia. Assinatura do portador. Mulher. Filhos. Emitido pel . . . Data. E válido até . . .
   *Portuguese (Brazil)*: Passaporte. Número do passaporte. Fotografia. Nome (Nome completo de solteira). Pai. Mãe. Data e local de nascimento. Nacionalidade. Estado civil (solteiro, casado, separado judicialmente, divorciado, viuvo). Sexo. Profissão ou ocupação principal. Filhos menores (nome, data de nascimento). Endereço principal. Repartição expedidora. Data de expedicão. Valido ate . . . Assinatura.
   *Italian (Italy)*: Passaporto numero. Fotografie. Cognome. Nome. Nome da ragazza. La data di nascita. Il luogo di nascita. Nazionalità. Professione. Indirizzo permanente. Statura. Occhi. Stato civile (celibe, nubile, coniugato, vedovo, divorziato). Stato di famiglia: coniuge o genitori. (Cognome e nome. Luogo e data di nascita. Cittadinanza.) Luogo e data di rilascio del passaporto. Validitá. Firma. Luogo e data.
2. For descriptions of various classroom simulations of real-life situations that would benefit from the utilization of such "passports," see the following articles by Dana Carton. "Learning by Doing: A Practical Foreign Language Classroom Experience." *Modern Language Journal*, 59 (1975), pp. 97–100 (a shopping unit, a banking unit). "Introducing a Real-Life Situation in the Foreign Language Classroom." *Modern Language Journal*, 61 (1977), pp. 13–16 (a postal unit). "Situational Learning Modules for the Adult Education Foreign Language Course." *Modern Language Journal*, 65 (Winter 1981), pp. 383–86. Vocabulary and structures for use with such situational modules (including the "passport" lesson) in the French language classroom can be found in Dana Carton and Anthony Caprio, *En Français: Practical Conversational French*, 2nd ed. (Boston, Heinle & Heinle Publishers, Inc., 1981).

ED238275

# 3 Personal Growth Through Student-Centered Activities

**Barbara Snyder**
Normandy High School, Parma, Ohio

**Carolann DeSelms**
Ohio Dominican College, Columbus, Ohio

An important goal in most schools is the social-emotional development of students. Students should, for example, develop personal self-worth, and they should learn to accept and understand one another, both at the interpersonal level and the intercultural level. Maslow has stated that "if we wish to develop strong, psychologically healthy citizens, then schools should be helping children to look within themselves to develop a self-knowledge from which they can derive a set of values."[1] The report of the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies states that "foreign language instruction at any level should be a humanistic pursuit intended to sensitize students to other cultures, to the relativity of values, to appreciation of similarities among peoples and respect for the differences among them."[2]

Moskowitz says, however, that many schools are guilty of "knowing the words but not the music."[3] Our goals are worthy but, in our preoccupation with day-to-day content learning, we often fail to relate the ultimate goals to everyday classroom practices. Communication involves more than a linguistically correct social exchange. True communicative competence involves formulating a point of view or a personal understanding to be communicated, valuing one's own contributions and being willing to share them with others, and learning to value the contributions of others.[4]

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Based on the assumption that social-emotional goals are both valuable and achievable and that their accomplishment can enhance content learn-

ing, this article offers some rationale for goals involving personal growth in the second-language classroom, some procedures and suggestions for creating classroom conditions in which personal growth may occur, and some activities that may be used to reach these goals.

## Personal Growth and Cognitive Achievement

Many foreign language educators recognize the need for developing personal growth. Brown, for example, considers self-esteem as the most pervasive aspect of any human behavior and says that "no successful cognitive or affective activity can be carried out without some degree of self-esteem, self-confidence, knowledge of yourself and belief in your own capabilities for that activity."[5] He defines three levels of self-esteem as global, situational, and task self-esteem. One's general level of self-esteem is global self-esteem; situational self-esteem refers to certain life situations such as work, education, communicative ability, or athletic ability; task self-esteem refers to specific tasks within a situation, such as speaking a foreign language. Brown cites research by Heyde showing that all three levels of self-esteem correlate positively with oral production. The students with high self-esteem performed better in the foreign language. Brown indicates, however, that self-esteem and language performance are interacting factors and that true communication "requires a sophisticated degree of empathy."[6] Personal growth occurs optimally, then, as each student has not only an opportunity to formulate his or her own ideas to be expressed in the foreign language, but also the opportunity to hear others express themselves. Listening and being listened to are both high priorities for student growth in the language classroom.

Christensen[7] believes that students who have a good self-image seem to flow with the teacher's lesson plan, and that students who have low self-esteem seem to create disturbances and to react negatively to what the teacher does. Christensen describes five levels of communication. Level One consists of clichés and superficial communication. Level Two represents the reporting of facts without any interpersonal information. Level Three involves sharing of an individual's ideas and revealing his or her judgments. This level involves some personal risk in communicating. In Level Four feelings and emotions are expressed. Christensen says that "ideas lie at the surface of real communication; feelings reside under-

neath."[8] Level Five is the completely open and honest communication that occurs within authentic friendships. Christensen notes that some students have never communicated on a level higher than Level Two, and that in some classrooms the only communication consists of clichés and the reporting of sterile facts. Levels Three and Four, however, can be accommodated as students apply the lesson of the day to their own and each other's real world experience.

The communicative purpose of this application may have two dimensions. Birckbichler[9] notes the difference between communication based on a need to communicate and communication for the purpose of communicative satisfaction. While students may have little need to speak a foreign language at age twelve, they may often use language for self-satisfaction, for satisfaction in developing interpersonal relationships, or for the satisfaction of learning about other cultures. It is the dimension of satisfaction that leads to increased student use of the target language and also to the implementation of the goal of personal growth in the language classroom.

Rivers[10] makes a distinction between normal and natural use of language. Communicative competence in normal language use may occur separately from the personal involvement implied by natural language use. Teachers can help students develop normal language use by creating or simulating likely situations in which students may wish to express themselves. Teachers can prepare students to choose confidently from the many possibilities within the language for expressing their intentions. Natural language, however, is a purposeful and significant use of language depending on relationships that may only be as natural as the teacher or student wants them to be or is willing for them to be. Natural language use in the classroom requires a relationship of acceptance and equality and of trust and confidence between the teacher and students, a relationship that, as Rivers points out, will not be achieved by every teacher in every classroom. For Rivers, the goal of personal growth would encompass both teacher and student growth as changes in interpersonal relationships occur and as they are permitted to develop. To accomplish this, teachers must reject traditional classroom relationships and build an interactional structure of working and learning together.

The next section, therefore, will look at practices and procedures that may create the interactional conditions necessary for personal growth to occur within a classroom situation.

## Classroom Practices that Foster Personal Growth

Tschudin[11] identified outstanding teachers and found that, among the seventeen differences between them and a comparable control group, outstanding teachers set goals to develop student confidence. Recognizing the importance of setting a goal is, however, only the first step. These outstanding teachers were also better in establishing a classroom atmosphere leading to the attainment of goals. What, then, are the characteristics of a classroom atmosphere in which personal growth can occur, and how can this atmosphere be achieved?

One important characteristic is that each learner must be recognized as an individual. The teacher must value the student as a functioning member of society and as a unique human being capable of two-way communication. The teacher must recognize student ideas, feelings, and attitudes and respond, not as an authority figure, but humanistically as another person sharing a particular time and space. Teacher behaviors that communicate this regard are meaningful, positive, and personal feedback; knowledge of and acknowledgment of students' personal characteristics; and the clarifying of and building upon student responses. Moskowitz[12] has identified teacher behaviors such as these and has shown that they lead to greater student satisfaction and better achievement. Moskowitz has also shown that good teachers provide for and utilize humor as a part of the classroom atmosphere.

Another characteristic of an atmosphere in which personal growth may occur is that the teacher must value personal student contributions made in the target language. That is, teachers must listen primarily to the content of what the student says and must respond meaningfully rather than responding to the degree of linguistic correctness of the utterance. Teacher reactions and responses to classroom occurrences make up what Walmsley[13] calls the TVS (Teacher Value System). He identifies the TVS as traditional attitudes toward features of the hidden curriculum in the second-language classroom such as surface structure accuracy, conformity to predetermined patterns, classroom quietness, and consistency. The desire for surface structure accuracy, for example, has traditionally been a highly rated value in foreign language teaching, but if it is taken as the only criterion for accepting or rejecting a learner utterance, it may conflict with genuine communication, meaningfulness, and rationality. If con-

formity to a pattern being practiced is desired, a student's response that is meaningful and genuinely informative may be rejected. The student learns, then, that the personal meaningfulness that usually characterizes language outside the classroom is not the value necessary for success in the classroom. Walmsley believes that

> the most damaging negative consequence of an inadequate TVS is the way in which it compels learners, in order to survive in the foreign language classroom, to adopt a set of values which, in terms of the real world, can only be described as distorted. . . . Not only is an inadequate TVS harmful, but it will also stand in direct conflict with what many pupils have been told is the justification for learning a foreign language in the first place, namely, its practical, instrumental value in the real world.[14]

Walmsley concludes that "whether genuine communication is achieved or not will depend less on how our model sentences are formulated and arranged than on the way they relate to each other and to the world."[15]

Valuing meaningful student contributions requires that the teacher provide opportunities for such contributions. Preliminary research by Omaggio[16] suggests that more effective teachers incorporate personalized language practice into daily lesson plans. She defines personalized communication as verbal exchanges that involve "(1) requesting or sharing facts about oneself or one's acquaintances; (2) requesting or expressing personal concerns; (3) sharing or eliciting private knowledge, opinions, judgments, or feelings; or (4) remembering or restating the personalized content contributed by other class members."[17] She goes on to classify these utterances as those that "clearly involve or elicit an individual's unique contribution to a discussion rather than a predetermined response."[18]

## Lesson Planning for Personal Growth

Personal growth in the classroom involves several levels of planning. Pattern drills, and even contextualized drills, are contrived and impersonal and therefore carry little meaning for most students. Nevertheless, textbook activities, however meaningless, can often be adapted for real classroom communication. For example, a textbook activity may ask where students are going after school but list imaginary people and impersonal

places as response cues: *Lucette/ campagne; Elena/ restaurante.* A much more meaningful activity can be developed by (1) asking various students in the class where they are really going, (2) writing those students' names and their answers on the board, (3) using this real list as the cues for the drill, and (4) erasing the board and asking the students where others are actually going. In addition to practicing the target language, students have also learned meaningful information through which they may get to know each other. After a drill based on personalized items, students often want to talk to others to find out more about, for example, when they are going, what they do there, and if they like it. Planning a lesson for personal growth often means beginning the lesson with personalized activities and following with a drill that is now meaningful. Lesson planning for personal growth usually means adapting textbook materials to the real students in class.

Whole-class activities such as these can also lead into small-group and individualized activities. A textbook dialogue line or drill line such as "I am going to watch TV four hours this Saturday" can be used as an activity that builds toward personalized communication. As in the previous example, the teacher may ask students for their own responses, but write only their estimated number of hours on the board. Such a list can then be used to recall individual answers: "Who is going to watch TV for five hours on Saturday?" This type of recall serves first to accustom students to listen to each other, and it can then serve as a transition to another activity that uses the same pattern in a small group. In groups of four or five, for example, students can compare how many hours they watch, find the average, and share with other groups, or they can find out if they watch the same programs. Although they are practicing one basic sentence illustrating the lesson of the day, students express and share personal information, form opinions, or make value judgments.

Individualized homework assignments may also build on this personalization. In the above example, students might be asked to "tell five things you are going to do this weekend besides watch TV," and this assignment can subsequently be used for more sharing of personal experiences. A homework assignment may also be used to initiate classroom practice. Students may be asked, for example, to list the programs they watch and then may use their own list to ask others (in both small groups and large groups) if they watch those programs. Finally they may do

another assignment in which they write about the others in class. Using materials they have personally prepared gives the students an interest in class activities and a reason to learn the linguistic lesson involved.

A summary of classroom practices and procedures for personal growth includes: (1) teacher attitudes of respect for students and their ideas, (2) valuing content as well as form of student responses, (3) getting students to listen to each other and respond to content as well as form, and (4) building on student ideas as part of the lesson. The following section, therefore, suggests classroom activities that build on student ideas and that lead to intrapersonal and interpersonal growth.[19]

## Activities for Personal Growth

Because the goals of developing self-worth and learning to accept and understand one another need to be addressed from the earliest levels of language study, many of the following activities may be used in the beginning classroom as well as in more advanced classes. These activities have been grouped into three categories: forming one's own values, sharing with others, and recognizing and respecting the values of others.

### *Forming one's own values*

The following activities require divergent answers; the student must be able to select answers based on his or her personal feelings, choices, beliefs, or values. Because beginning students may not have sufficient vocabulary to respond in some situations, the teacher may have to provide both realistic and imaginative alternatives. Additionally, the teacher must select those activities that best fit the topic being studied in class, that best meet the needs of the particular students involved, and that can best be accomplished by students at a given level of proficiency. Finally, the teacher must decide upon the best sequence and strategy (whole class, small group, individual) for implementing each activity in the classroom.

**Values continuums.** Using scales adapted from the Osgood semantic differential adjective lists,[20] students can be asked to determine their own attitudes about a wide variety of concepts drawn from the language lesson. The semantic differential consists of a bipolar adjective scale and an attitude to be evaluated. For research use, these bipolar adjectives are

separated by seven steps, but for use in the classroom only four or five steps are needed. Some examples from Osgood's evaluative pairs are happy/sad, beautiful/ugly, pleasant/unpleasant, fair/unfair, and valuable/worthless. These adjectives are often qualified by adverbs indicating the various steps: very happy, somewhat happy, happy, neutral, sad, somewhat sad, very sad. The teacher may ask students to evaluate a series of statements from the language lesson using one or more of these bipolar scales. Here are two examples.

**A.** Tell how you feel in the following situations. (Very happy/somewhat happy/somewhat sad/very sad)

1. When I am in school, I am . . .
2. When I am at a dance, I am . . .
3. When I am in the cafeteria, I am . . .
4. When I am at a football game, I am . . .

**B.** How fair are the following? (Very fair/somewhat fair/fair/somewhat unfair/unfair)

1. Young people can vote when they are 18.
2. Teenagers can drive when they are 16.
3. Students can quit school when they are 16.
4. American citizens can become president when they are 35.

Another scale that can be used as a values continuum is the Likert scale.[21] This scale asks students to agree or disagree with statements, and, like the Osgood scale, it usually has seven steps qualified by adverbs. Here is an example from a language classroom.

**C.** Do you agree or disagree with these statements? (Strongly agree / agree /disagree /strongly disagree)

1. Sports are very important.
2. Girls' sports are exciting.
3. Baseball is an interesting sport.
4. Soccer is a popular sport.

**Making choices.** The Kuder Preference Test used for career guidance asks students to select their personal preferences from a set of preselected alternatives. This activity can be expanded and adapted for use in the language classroom. Here are two examples.

A. How would you most like to spend Saturday afternoon?

I want to go to the movies.
I want to watch TV.
I want to listen to the radio.

B. What are you going to do with a gift of $10?

I'm going to go to a concert.
I'm going to buy a record.
I'm going to deposit it in a bank account.

**Divergent exercises.** Divergent completion exercises that have a number of possible answers allow students to respond personally. These may be open-ended with the teacher supplying those specific vocabulary items requested by individual students, or a reasonably comprehensive list may be provided from which students may choose responses. Here are examples.

A. Complete these statements based on your career plans.

1. I can . . . (*Examples:* write well, speak Spanish)
2. I want to work in . . . (*Examples:* a bank, another country)
3. I want to work with . . . (*Examples:* animals, computers)
4. I have to study . . . (*Examples:* math, foreign languages)

B. What characteristics would best complete these sentences?

1. Ideal parents are . . .
2. I want to be more . . .
3. Teachers seldom are . . .
   (patient, understanding, kind, nice, tolerant, loyal, smart, intelligent, interesting, reasonable, courteous, happy)

**Personalized list-making.** Another type of divergent exercise is the student-generated list based on the grammar or vocabulary topic of the lesson. For example, students may be asked to list "Things I think are beautiful," "Things to do in my free time," "Things I can buy at a supermarket," "Things I want to finish," "Things I know," "People I know," etc. When the teacher is unsure of appropriate vocabulary that students need in order to be able to communicate on a topic, he or she can ask students to generate lists from which further exercises may be developed.

Learning to recognize and express one's own ideas, opinions, and values is an important first step in developing the self-esteem that is necessary to be able to recognize and accept others' values. Another step is learning to share one's contributions with others.

### *Sharing with others*

Although the goal is to develop a classroom climate in which feelings, ideas, and values can be shared, students should not be forced to participate on a more personal level than they feel comfortable with. Students must willingly share their hopes and dreams and values with others in order to have a cooperative classroom atmosphere. Students are often more willing to share their personal feelings in a small-group setting than when answering before the whole class; the small group, therefore, is an effective intermediate level of sharing after the student has formed an idea but before he or she feels comfortable expressing it before a large group. Students may or may not, for example, want to share the personal ideas, feelings, and opinions elicited from the activities in the previous section. When the teacher provides a variety of topics and exercises, however, reticent students have more opportunities to find a nonthreatening topic for initial practice in sharing, and all students are provided with situations through which sharing may be experienced. Here then are additional activities that permit students to share ideas with each other.[22]

**Snapshots.** Students may bring a snapshot to class of their family, friend, or pet; a picture taken on vacation or at a party, dance, or concert; their own baby picture or a picture they have taken of others. They can first tell about the picture and then give their feelings and reactions to it.

**Show and tell.** Students bring an example of a hobby, an unusual possession, or a favorite magazine or record, and tell why they chose to bring it and why they like or dislike it.

**A secret.** In a small group, students describe something about themselves that the others don't know or something they know that others don't know. After the group has learned the others' secrets, one student tells the class one of these secrets and the rest of the class tries to guess whose secret it is.

**Personal events.** Students describe a happy, sad, or exciting memory; something unusual, frightening, embarrassing, or fantastic that happened to them; or an activity in which they have participated.

**Personal knowledge.** Students tell something that they have special knowledge about such as a hobby, another class, how to do something, or something they have written, experienced, invented, made, or created.

**To tell the truth.** Students make statements and others have to decide whether each statement represents that student's values or beliefs or not. Was this a real or an imaginary statement?

**Problem solving.** Students share "how-to" suggestions for solving common problems such as how to keep your temper, how to get out of a bad mood, how to get to class on time, or how to make someone happy.

**Voting.** Students must listen to reports by other class members and vote on the results. For example, whose unusual personal event was most unusual, or whose example of a hobby was most interesting?

After practice in sharing their own ideas with others and in listening to others' ideas, students may be ready to recognize and accept feelings and opinions that are different than their own.

### *Recognizing and respecting the values of others*

Awareness of one's own values, a willingness to share those values with others in a nonthreatening way, and a willingness to listen to others' ideas precede the ability to recognize and respect values of others that may be different from one's own. Teachers have the responsibility of selecting and sequencing classroom activities that allow students to develop within each level and to move to more complex levels of interaction. The following activities, therefore, assume sufficient intrapersonal and interpersonal experience to allow meaningful participation in both cognitive and affective aspects of dealing with others' values.

**Ordinary and extraordinary.** Students look for different ways to do ordinary things. Here are examples of questions that students can ask in order to find different answers.

1. When do you brush your teeth—when you get up, just before you leave for school, at school, . . . ?
2. Where do you study—at the kitchen table, at the dining room table, at a desk in your room, . . . ?
3. What do you do for a headache—take an aspirin, take a break, take a nap, . . . ?

**Seeing through another's eyes.** Students are asked to imagine that they are in someone else's shoes or looking through another's eyes. Instead of presenting their own point of view, they tell something as another person might.

**A.** Pretend to be the following people and tell what each might say they were doing on Saturday morning.

1. your mother (I'm working.)
2. the teacher (I'm cooking.)
3. the bus driver (I'm going to a wedding.)

The student may also be asked to look at himself or herself from another person's point of view.

**B.** What would the following people say that I was doing on Saturday morning? (I'm really watching cartoons.)

1. my mother (She's cleaning her room.)
2. my teacher (She's studying.)
3. the bus driver (She's still sleeping.)

**Live and let live.** Students are asked to find people who would give a different answer than they would.

1. List things that you don't like and see if anyone likes them. (I don't like to read but Caroline does.)
2. List things that you like and tell if others don't. (I like country music but John and Sally don't.)
3. Find things that others can do that you can't do. (Ann plays the piano but I don't.)

**Seek the unique.** Students are asked to find things they have or things they do that are unique—or unique in a particular class. (I collect miniature elephants. I have nine brothers and sisters.) Students can also be asked to tell about things that their family and friends have or do that are unique. (My grandfather has a grandfather clock.)

**It takes two.** Students are asked to give opposites in statements about themselves and classmates (My cat is white and Joe's cat is black), to give advantages and disadvantages (The car is big but the car is expensive), or to give the good news and bad news (I did my homework but my dog ate it; It's time for dinner but we're having spinach).

Classroom activities[23] that help meet social-emotional goals are those in which the potential of personal opinions and ideas may be examined and through which students may learn to feel comfortable and confident about personal abilities and characteristics. They are activities that invite students to communicate with others. Finally, as a result of this intrapersonal and interpersonal communication, students may learn to acknowledge and respect the opinions, ideas, values, and characteristics of others. The real value of learning another language may lie not in learning the words, but rather in learning the music, that is, learning about oneself, learning to communicate with others, and learning to recognize and respect others' ideas and values. While the linguistic aspects of language may not be retained, the experiences that emerge through communicative and creative use of language will always remain a part of the individual's personal reality.

**Notes**

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ED238276

# 4 Situations for Communication:

## Growth in Competence and Confidence

**Ronald W. Walker**
**Colorado State University, Fort Collins**

"Ladies and gentlemen: this extraordinary session of the United Nations Security Council is called to order . . ."[1] and class begins. A political science or history course? No—a foreign language class.

The sixteen fourth-year German language students sit at desks placed in a semicircle in a comfortable classroom at Colorado State University. Affixed to the front of each desk is the name of a Security Council member nation. Before each student lies a stack of papers. A tape recorder hums quietly in the corner. The instructor continues.

"On the 15th of December, 1981, the Polish government declared martial law in Warsaw following more than a year of negotiations with the Solidarity Union. Discussions between high ranking members of the Polish cabinet and chiefs of government of both Eastern and Western powers had already taken place; topics of these discussions included Poland's economic situation, the Polish government's desires for credit with Western banks, and domestic tensions in Poland. Thousands of citizens in European and other Western countries demonstrated in many cities against the invocation of martial law, and the world press interceded on behalf of the Union and the rights of Polish citizens.

"Then suddenly last Thursday night, Soviet troops from the USSR, the GDR, Hungary, and Bulgaria marched into Poland; contingents from three East European air forces landed at the Warsaw airport, which then ceased operations; Soviet ships sealed Polish ports on the Baltic. Moscow, in an official TASS press release, quoted an appeal from Polish communists for help in reestablishing order. The Communist Party leadership in War-

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saw encouraged the population and the Polish army to offer no armed resistance."

The students, each an "ambassador" to the UN Security Council from some predesignated country, listen attentively. The first paragraph quoted above is an accurate account of the events of winter 1981–82. The class in which this particular exercise was used took place in February 1982, when tensions were still high and the outcome uncertain. The second paragraph is an invention of the author, designed to create a situation in which discussion can take place. The instructor, serving as nonvoting chairman of the Council, reads the resolution.

"Resolved: The Security Council of the United Nations, in accordance with the Law of Nations and the Charter of the United Nations Organization, demands: (1) the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops from Polish soil, (2) the unconditional release of all imprisoned Union members and other political prisoners, and (3) the immediate resumption of negotiations between the Polish government and the Solidarity Union."

The students have prepared well for this meeting. Each student has read two articles, an English one in *Time* and a German one in *Die Zeit*, and thus knows the factual background of the Polish situation; a summary statement in German, prepared by the teacher, recounts the "facts" of the invasion. Vocabulary control is essential; indeed, it is the key to successful communication. The articles read help to build a vocabulary background for the conversational situation—the students compile and assimilate a list of words and idioms they expect to need; good retention of this vocabulary results from its use in the context of an active, real experience. A supplementary vocabulary sheet lists those words necessary for conducting the meeting: to call to order, to make (second) a motion, to have the floor, the motion carries (fails), in order, out of order, and so forth.[2]

In addition, each student has chosen the country he or she wishes to represent from a list of UN member states prepared by the teacher. The cards have already been stacked against a quick decision and in favor of discussion, negotiation, persuasion, and compromise. The Security Council has five permanent members with an absolute veto: the USA, the USSR, the United Kingdom, France, and China. A simple statement that the Soviet Union "does not recognize this special session of the Council and has boycotted the meeting" eliminates the possibility that the resolution might be vetoed. The teacher chooses the remaining members of the

Council, but not at random. The Council includes pro-Western members (Japan, Sweden), spokesmen for the Soviet bloc (Bulgaria, Hungary), and third world or neutral nations (Egypt, Finland, Ghana). Each "ambassador" has received "instructions" from the government. Here the cards have been stacked as well, without, however, ignoring plausible positions or sympathies of the real governments involved.

The Hungarian ambassador is told, for example: (1) in the absence of the USSR, Hungary is the principal voice of the Eastern bloc nations; (2) Hungary is to maintain that Polish leaders appealed to friendly communist powers for aid, and that the entry into Poland is not aggression, but assistance to comrades in the international communist movement; and (3) Hungary will vote consistently against the resolution. The United States' ambassador is informed: (1) the USA is the principal spokesperson for the resolution; (2) the invasion constitutes aggression and is contrary to the Law of Nations; (3) compromise is not an option; and (4) the USA is to demand economic sanctions and, if necessary, military measures against the invading powers. Other members of the Council who fall "neatly" into either the Eastern or Western camp are charged to follow the lead of Hungary or the US respectively.

The teacher does not plan the final disposition of the resolution: neither the Eastern nor the Western bloc has sufficient votes for the necessary two-thirds majority. The balance of power lies with the neutral members, which lean in varying degrees toward either the US or the Hungarian position. Egypt, for example, is instructed: (1) that it is to be morally for the resolution but to remain politically neutral; (2) that Egypt may support the resolution if it has already attained the necessary two-thirds majority; and (3) that Egypt may vote for the resolution if the argumentation is sufficiently persuasive, even if there are not enough votes for approval. Some ambassadors are directed that their vote may in no case be the decisive one (Finland), that the ambassador may vote as conscience dictates (India), or that, due to economic commitments with the Eastern bloc, the ambassador must abstain (Brazil). The action taken on the resolution at the end of the second day of discussion thus results directly from the interaction of the various roles played and the positions taken and represented.

After each representative has made his or her opening statement and has announced a position on the resolution, a less structured discussion

begins. Arguments are presented and counter arguments are made, and the exchange of ideas and position statements flows almost with a will of its own. Each ambassador is required minimally to make four statements during each fifty-minute class, so that the more gregarious types do not monopolize the floor.

The instructor sits on the same level as the group and acts as participant, model, and facilitator in the discussion. In each of the situations the teacher "presides" as chairperson, judge, or leader. If the situation is to succeed, the teacher requires a good deal of tolerance for student errors. The correction of errors inhibits communication and is done sparingly. (I correct only those errors that impede communication and then only by means of asking a question "for clarification" or by using the misused word, idiom, or structure correctly soon after the error occurs. Better students often perceive errors as well and "correct" them in the same fashion.)

Such situations for communication are excellent vehicles for stimulating growth in communication skills among advanced students. New avenues of communication open for the students, since they are not tied to a text, nor to patterns set by the teacher. The situation developed here is a genuine communicative setting where the students participate in a dynamic exchange of ideas and positions. The requisite vocabulary is available, factual information and positions to be taken are provided, and the students are forced to speak extemporaneously—what they say is neither read nor recited, and they thus sense a liberation from "directed" speech and linguistic drills. They feel free to be creative and may experiment with new structures and vocabulary.

I do three or four such situations per semester in an advanced composition and conversation course. Two class periods, sometimes three, are set aside for each exercise, and the students have three to five days to prepare.

Preparing the materials, at least in the beginning, is time-consuming for the instructor. The basic idea is simple—create a "meeting" situation where each student is given a role to play or a position to represent and where discussion leading to a decision must take place. The teacher plans carefully—the materials must be appropriate to the level of competence and the interests of the students. Their instructions, in the target language, are brief and explicit. Students need to understand not only *what* they are

to do and *when* they will do it, but *why* as well. The trade-off between time and effort spent and the returns in student confidence and competence in speaking must be favorable. I am convinced that it is. Let me give a second example: the legal proceeding.

The intricacies of a courtroom trial are too complex for this kind of exercise; I choose rather the much less formal "hearing." Being less structured, it is not subject to the restraints and limitations of a trial. Often a social or political issue of the country whose language the students are learning interests them, and they request information about it. Such a topic can provide the substance of a communication situation.

For some time in the Federal Republic of Germany, students, dropouts, runaways, and other transients have been illegally moving into vacant buildings awaiting demolition. These squatters (*Hausbesetzer*) set up housekeeping and remain, sometimes for many months, without paying rent or other required fees. They ignore orders to vacate, which leads to clashes with police and with other public officials. In the fall of 1981, an eighteen-year-old squatter in one of these buildings was struck and killed by a bus during the aftermath of a police raid in that building. An inquiry into his death provides the substance of our hearing.

Students read a long article in *Stern* (1 October 1981) to learn the factual background of the case. At mid-morning on the 22 of September 1981, the Berlin police raid a house full of squatters at Bülowstrasse 89. A crowd gathers outside. As the police force the occupants of the building onto the sidewalk, Klaus Jürgen Rattay falls beneath the wheels of a public bus. He dies at the scene. Police witnesses later claim that the eighteen-year-old Rattay had climbed onto the bumper of the bus with a rock in his hand and was attempting to break its windshield when he lost his balance and fell. Others label the police as direct or indirect cause of the death. Charges and counter charges are made.

In this situation for communication—a hearing into the death of Klaus Jürgen Rattay—each student serves two roles: (1) as a member of the court that will determine responsibility for Rattay's death and (2) as a witness at the hearing. As in the earlier exercises, each student receives general instructions concerning what may or may not be offered as testimony, how to act or react to certain specifics, and what kind of an "impression" to make on the court. The witnesses are:

1. Hans Peter Richter, police sergeant for twelve years and the first person to enter the occupied house during the raid
2. Heinrich Lummer, police commissioner in Berlin who ordered the raid on the building at Bülowstrasse 89
3. Max Schmidt, driver of bus number 48, which struck Klaus Rattay
4. Dr. Ursula von Hohenstein, medical examiner who examined the body and the accident site
5. Mrs. Marthe Kaiser, housewife who lives on Bülowstrasse and who saw the accident from her apartment window
6. Gisela Masern, an eyewitness who was standing on the corner when Klaus Rattay was killed
7. Maria Rattay, Klaus Rattay's mother
8. Käthe Meyer-Frank, Klaus Rattay's girl friend who had lived with him for about six months in the Bülowstrasse house
9. Susanna Hofstaedter, a radical resident of the occupied building who did not know Klaus Rattay personally
10. Wilhelmina "Willi" Stern, a demonstrator in the crowd who is not a squatter
11. Siglinde "Sigi" Martz, a squatter who was in the room where the police broke in with sledgehammers and tear gas

Three days are scheduled to hear the witnesses. The instructor acts as presiding judge and in each case begins the questioning so that the essentials of the testimony come to light. The teacher is the only one who knows the subject of each person's testimony. Within the broad limitations of the actual facts of the case as reported in the press, the student witnesses are encouraged to be creative; their testimony may be anything they want it to be so long as it is plausible, consistent, and pertinent. After the judge has posed his or her questions, the students, as "members of the court," may ask questions. In practice, this phase of the exercise turned out to be a type of cross-examination in which each "witness," speaking in the alternate role of questioner, sought confirmation of his or her testimony from the other witnesses.

After all witnesses are heard, the class members vote and decide who is responsible for Klaus Rattay's death: the police, either through overt or inadvertent action, or Rattay himself.

The Rattay case is an especially good one for this type of exercise, because many questions remain open. Witnesses (as reported in the press) do not agree on what happened and blame is denied by all. In preparing for their roles in this hearing, my students learn more about the social phenomenon of the *Hausbesetzer* in Berlin than any merely "academic" inquiry into the subject might provide. While the principal objective of the exercise remains the enhancement and development of communication skills, the by-product of increased social-cultural awareness of one aspect of the country whose language they are learning is important.

Students differ markedly in ability, interests, goals, and level of mastery. A typical class includes both language majors and non-majors; students who have just returned from a junior year abroad and those who have never been in Germany; gregarious, uninhibited individuals and shy persons—or those who merely appear shy because they have yet to develop self-confidence in the foreign language. Roles are never assigned at random, but with such differences among students in mind. Two approaches suggest themselves, and I have used both. (1) Typecasting. A brash, sometimes abrasive young journalism major is chosen to play the police commissioner and a shy, quiet student who is able to evince the mother's anguish and frustration receives the role of Rattay's mother. (2) Cross casting. Often speaking a foreign language encourages role playing or allows another facet of one's personality to emerge. A rather prim, conventional young woman undertakes the part of Rattay's radical, live-in girl friend—which she plays "to the hilt" and enjoys immensely. Each of these approaches may present problems. The teacher should never assign roles lightly or casually, but should always keep the individual student's strengths, interests, and personality in mind.

It is important that the teacher identify leaders among the class members early in the semester. These persons must have good language skills, but may not necessarily be the best students in the class in terms of grammar mastery. Indications that they are reliable, i.e., that they can and will work independently and that they are sensitive and nonjudgmental toward fellow students, increase their chances for success as leaders. These students assume larger, more "demanding" roles or those in which a stronger voice is needed. The extreme positions in the Security Council exercise (the USA and Hungary) were taken by such students. The teacher can also take into consideration individual interests among the students.

In the same exercise, a student of Swedish ancestry who is studying Swedish privately is named ambassador from Sweden; a premed student plays the role of medical examiner and, because of her interest, brings more to the role than might otherwise have been the case.

A third type of meeting is the selection committee. This committee may be of various types, but in each case there are a number of candidates for some office, honor, or award.[3] The students receive a list of those candidates with their qualifications and accomplishments and come to the meeting prepared to support a first, second, and third choice for the award. During the discussion, compromises are made and the group eventually arrives at the name of a recipient. The award may be one that actually exists (e.g., the Nobel Peace Prize) or one invented by the instructor. I created the one used in this example. The student receives the following information and the attached list of candidates.

> Each year the government of the Federal Republic of Germany chooses a recipient for the National Award of Merit, bestowed upon that person who has "most contributed to the community, the state, or the nation." You have been appointed by the President of the Federal Republic to the Award Advisory Committee. This Committee is to provide the President with not more than three names, ranked in order of committee preference, from which he shall choose the recipient. The candidates this year are listed below.
>
> A. Anna-Maria Lisson, born 1902 in Prague, naturalized German citizen, 1925. Trained as a dancer at the Royal Academy of Ballet in London. Danced with Padarosdorff and de Grigny. Founded a dance studio in Berlin in 1931, which still enjoys an international reputation. Served at several universities in the Federal Republic as visiting professor and director of the resident dance company.
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> B. Wilhelmina Schmidt von Hohenschloss, born 1919 in Stuttgart. Education: Diplom-Ing., Bamberg; Lic. Sci., Sorbonne; Ph.D., M.I.T. (USA). Recently retired from the Einstein Chair in Physics at Cal Tech (USA). Shared the 1974 Nobel Prize for Physics with three colleagues for their work on the interface between nuclear physics and molecular biology.
>
> C. Sister Lisa Bumaji, born 1910 in Calcutta. Educated at the St. Theresa Mission School, Calcutta, the Ursuline Seminary, Boston (USA), and the University Hospital, Würzburg. Served as nurse at the mission school and hospital in Katmandu, Nepal, 1939–50; as chief nurse of a mission to the leper colony in the Congo, 1950–58; as missionary nurse to the untouchables in Bombay, 1958 to date. Received in 1974 the Order of Papal Merit from Pope Paul VI and in 1978 the Médaille d'or of the International Red Cross. Currently working on a UNESCO project in the Federal Republic.
>
> D. Dr. Samuel Samba Kuomo, B. Eng., Hon. DSc., born 1920 in Cullaro, Tamberia, West Africa. Educated at the Methodist Mission School, West Africa

and the University of Hamburg. Engineer with Norddeutsche Lloyd, 1941–45; the German Texaco Oil conglomerate, 1945–49; Lector, Cullaro Institute of Technology, 1949–53; Minister of Science, Tamberia, 1954–62; Dean, University of Kuango, 1963–66; UNESCO, 1966–76. Currently member of a team from Tamberia leading negotiations concerning possible cooperation between Tamberia and the Federal Republic in the exploitation of recently discovered copper deposits in the Black Forest.

E. Lieutenant-General Joseph Franz Hindenburg, born 1918 in Königsberg, East Prussia. Education: University of Königsberg, Institute of Technology in Warsaw, and the Imperial Officers Training Academy in Berlin. Served on the eastern front during World War II. Currently Director of Energy Development for the West German Bundeswehr and temporarily serving with a NATO Commission for Energy Development in Europe. Has presented lectures at several German universities on the topic "Untapped Energy Sources in the Federal Republic."

F. Hans Peter Strauss, born 1928 in Reutlingen bei Tübingen. CSU member of parliament. Education: Staatsexamen (English and French), Paderborn, 1950. A CSU party member since 1947; elected to parliament in 1959. Currently chairman of the Committee for Education and Program Development.

G. Moses Richard Mendelssohn, born 1930 in Munich. Education: Staatsexamen (German Literature), Munich. Inmate of Dachau concentration camp, 1941–45. Author of novels (*To Live or Die, A Million Lights—A Silent Watch*) and plays (*Trial by Fire, Damned in Ingolstadt*). Currently Writer in Residence at Colorado State University (USA).

This situation for communication enjoys the by-product of values clarification. In discussing the candidates the students must consider the relative merit of the candidates' achievements to the community, the state, or the nation. In doing so, a student must present a viewpoint, defend it, and convince others of its validity. Then those values—or rather the candidates who represent those values—must be ranked and three of them designated as potential recipients of the award. To heighten the interaction and preclude a quick decision, certain "complication factors" are built in. The military figure, the career politician, the black engineer, the Jewish writer, the selfless nun all contribute to the authenticity of the communication taking place.

As indicated previously, each session is taped. It is my experience that the presence of a tape recorder inhibits discussion only momentarily—the student is soon deeply involved in the exchange of ideas and forgets the recorder. This recording serves several purposes. It helps me revise the situation, deleting elements that do not work, building in aspects improvised by the students, and noting additional information that is needed.

While I do not interrupt the conversational flow to correct errors, neither do I let them go by without comment. During a subsequent class, we recap the entire exercise. Misused vocabulary and idioms are discussed and compared; problems in structure are brought up; errors in pronunciation can be discussed in general or brought privately to the attention of individual students. The tapes also indicate who needs to speak more and who needs to show restraint.

Grading such exercises presents a problem. Having devoted much time to preparation, the students deserve credit for their efforts. However, that credit cannot be the same for everyone. The grade earned can be determined from the tape recording rather than from the teacher's recollection or impressions of the session. Included as factors in the evaluation are the student's preparation as exhibited in performance, what the student is able to communicate and how well, the number of instances a student contributes to the discussion, the value and pertinence of that contribution to the topic, and mechanical errors in areas the student is expected to control.

The approach to practicing communication skills presented here goes well beyond the communicative drill to interactional activity, where the students can be creative and where their competence can mature and their confidence in speaking can grow. It provides a setting in which there is a meaningful exchange of ideas, information, and feelings within the target language. This is the essence of communication.

**Notes**

1. Unless otherwise indicated in the body of the text, all materials presented to the student and all class activities are conducted in the target language; examples are given here in English for the convenience of the reader.
2. I have found the list of discussion functions presented by Claire J. Kramsch, "Teaching Discussion Skills: A Pragmatic Approach," *Foreign Language Annals* 14, ii (1981), pp. 93–104, to be extremely helpful; my students receive an abbreviated form of that list early in the semester.
3. This idea originates with Professor Leo Evans, City University, London, who uses meetings to study decision-making processes and to teach workshops on decision making.

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# Real Language:

## A Gateway to Cultural Identification

**Michael D. Oates and D. C. Hawley**
**University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls**

Beginning students often naively believe that they will be able to put the language they have chosen to study to immediate use. The wise teacher gives them some chance to do just that in actual short questions and answers or in some other type of exposure to the spoken language, such as the Asher TPR method.[1] As we know, however, the road to real proficiency in a foreign language is long and includes, especially at the intermediate level, both steep hills and deep potholes. Thus vocabulary load and false cognates, acquisition of syntax and grammatical anomalies, continued control of sounds and prosodic features combine to bring about the sense of frustration that will constitute still one more major impediment to motivation and learning.

It is the thesis of this article that student motivation can be maintained and enhanced when teachers combine authentic oral and written language with activities that lead the student to identify with sympathetic individuals from the target culture. These activities, emphasizing language training at the intermediate level, will include interviewing native speakers, training in listening comprehension based on unrehearsed videotaped and tape-recorded conversations, the use of a newspaper, and the opportunity to "show off" cultural lexical and syntactical material both in class and out of class. In-class practice will involve skits, individual presentations, and compositions. Out-of-class activities may include impromptu exchange with teachers and others, language weekends, and longer opportunities for immersion both at home and abroad.

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## The First Few Days

Late August is perhaps the best time to find, in or near our local communities, native speakers of our target language. This is especially true for youthful travelers from Western Europe, whose school year often starts two or three weeks later than that of their North American counterparts. The presence of these young people offers a golden opportunity for bringing students into personal contact with specific individuals cast in the role of cultural and linguistic models, a resource that can be "exploited," in the form of videotape, long after the visitors have returned to their own country.

In our midwestern locale, we actively seek out native speakers whose stay in our area will overlap with the beginning of the fall semester. If they are willing, we plan the following activities. Teachers get to know the travelers, take a snapshot of each of them, and invite them to meet students after two or three class days have gone by. On the first day of our intermediate classes, once the names of students are learned or relearned, the snapshots are passed around, the names of the people in the pictures are written on the board, and teachers provide a brief biographical sketch of each. During the rest of the period, students are told to write questions they would like to have teachers ask the native speakers during a videotape interview. After class, teachers correct the questions using a code (discussed below) and select a number of questions they will ask.

On the second day, the questions are returned to students who, once they have corrected them with the help of the coded directions, address some of their queries to the instructor as a full-class activity. They then are put in groups of two or three to invent answers to each other's questions. Finally, and depending on their linguistic ability, a few students can be selected to take the teacher's place, role playing one of the native speakers in the snapshots while answering the questions. This initial identification is especially encouraged because of the intensive effort that will be required of students once they begin focusing on the recorded interview of the teacher and native speakers.

After these two class days have elapsed, the travelers may be invited to class, or an after-school or evening get-together may be planned. If this is possible, the students, armed with well rehearsed questions, will get an opportunity to meet the people in the pictures. It is normally far more

satisfying for all involved when the students actively participate in the native speakers' visit rather than passively sit through a speech. Often the foreign visitor will be able to judge students' vocabulary level accurately through the questions asked and to reuse many of the words when formulating a response.

Whether or not students actually get to see the native speakers in person, they will at least have become quite familiar with the questions and potential answers they can expect to encounter on the videotape.

## The Videotape

It is preferable that teachers, rather than students, conduct the interviews that are recorded on videotape. Since the goal is to provide an oral track that can be copied onto cassettes for future use, the teacher will have the best chance of controlling clarity, accuracy, length of pauses, and timing of questions. This is especially true when the interview is conducted at the beginning of the fall semester and students' language skills are rusty. As far as the native speaker is concerned, the interview should not be rehearsed, nor should the questions be seen beforehand. This insures that the speech will be as natural and authentic as possible, including filler words, hesitation, and incomplete sentences. We agree with Rivers' comment that "artificially constructed messages, such as those frequently devised for use in language classes, often unwittingly reduce the amount of redundancy supplied by a speaker in a normal situation."[2] The teacher, however, tactfully interrupts to ask for clarification or the meaning of a particular word, and to avoid the interview turning into a monologue on the part of the native speaker. The person filming the interview is told to concentrate on the upper body, including hand, shoulder, and especially facial gestures. With respect to length, a ten minute interview is ideal. This allows the videotape to be shown in its entirety two or three times in any class without consuming all available time.

It is recommended that the first two viewings of the videotape be without sound, so students can concentrate on body language and later describe and reproduce gestures observed. (Since they wrote the questions, they will have a general idea of what is being discussed in the film.) Hopefully this emphasis on the visual will sensitize students to the multitude of meanings expressed through facial expressions and gestures, and

may pay dividends in the ad-lib conversations and prepared skits which are to follow.

Prior to the third viewing of the tape, in which the sound will be turned on, teachers can point out filler words such as "well," "that is to say," "uh," etc., which actually occur in the film, and have students practice them. Students are challenged to try to ad-lib a short dialogue employing all the filler words taught and avoiding their English equivalents. This "spy practice" is an important initial step on the road to wanting to pass in the foreign culture.[3] When the videotape is finally both seen and heard, students will "own," through their own questions and practice with filler words and gestures, much of the content of the tape.

## Intensive Listening

Part or all of the sound track from the videotape may be copied onto cassette tapes to provide a corpus of spontaneous native speech to be thoroughly exploited. In intermediate level conversation courses, for example, a copy of the cassette can be provided for each student and from three to five minutes of the oral script assigned once a week as an out-of-class dictation. Teachers should provide necessary low frequency words and proper names that students would otherwise find too difficult. A sample sequence is as follows.

1. Directions are to work alone and write all that is heard, including hesitations and repetitions of certain words.
2. Teachers underline all errors and assign a grade.
3. The papers are handed back and, using a transparency, corrections are made by the students themselves as a full-class activity.
4. Cultural, lexical, and semantic explanations are provided as necessary.
5. A key sentence or two is practiced by the whole class, which attempts to reproduce it exactly with the intonation, accent, elision, linking, etc. heard on the tape.

Our experience is that students make a special attempt to pronounce a specific sentence accurately when they know it is authentic. This overlearning of a limited amount of material, selected from a context over

which they have had an element of control, helps to combat occasional reluctance to want to sound *too* much like the native.[4]

Other possibilities for exploiting the cassette tape would be to do the dictation as a full-class or small-group activity. As a full-class activity, the teacher could play a sentence, ask an individual to repeat it, and then write it on a transparency for the class to copy. If used in groups, one student can act as the stenographer with all participating in trying to understand exactly what is said on the tape.

The intensive listening required to be able to reproduce the text of a brief segment of real language will be very beneficial when students are asked to role play similar situations.

## Skits and Individual Presentations

A useful activity, which may follow immediately the full-class correction of the tape script, is to divide the class into groups of two and to have them try to ad-lib a conversation that begins with one of the open-ended sentences used on the tape. Since they have worked hard to understand what was said and are quite familiar with a context in which it can be used, they are often able to "run with the ball" when given a first statement such as "How long have you been in the USA?" or "Do you like American food?" While students are encouraged to say whatever they wish, it has been our experience that they inevitably include several of the expressions they encountered on the tape and become proficient at using authentic filler words and target language hesitation devices to "buy time" to think.

Students may be assigned periodically to groups of three to prepare short skits, including props and, especially, accurate gestures, which they will present to the class. These skits should be graded, with each member of a group receiving the same grade, based mainly on how clear and well prepared they are.

One by one, class members may be assigned a one-minute individual presentation; once the presentation is given, the rest of the class should ask questions of the individual. If they wish, individuals may assume the identity of one of the native speakers from the tape, thereby getting still another chance to reuse some of their recent stock of expressions and cultural information. These sessions are useful in further preparing stu-

dents to engage in the verbal duel that is part and parcel of progress in conversational ability.

## Student Interviews

Another activity which may be employed to increase student contact with speakers of the language studied is to prepare and record an interview as members of a team. Whereas it was the teacher who asked the student-prepared questions during the filming of the videotape, it is now quite advantageous to have students increase their stake in the preparation of classroom materials by being responsible for a tape-recorded interview. The teacher supplies a list of people in the community who are either native or near-native speakers of the language and have agreed to be interviewed by students.

Working in a team of two or three, students prepare their questions and share them with the teacher for correction. They then practice asking the questions and brainstorming to imagine possible answers. Directions given them might be as follows.

1. Contact the person you will interview, ask permission, and agree on a time and place to meet. State that you will only speak the target language during the course of your meeting.
2. During your meeting, after you have broken the ice by introducing yourselves and chatting a bit with the interviewee, record five minutes of unrehearsed interview. Do not let the interviewee see your questions beforehand. All members of the team must ask questions.
3. As soon as possible after the interview, meet to copy down what was said.
4. Choose three expressions from the interview, which the whole class will have to learn. Write them down and use them in complete sentences.
5. Hand in the cassette tape, the written text, and the three expressions.

Once the teacher hands back the above materials, the team prepares a presentation for the whole class, including teaching the three expressions to the others, talking about their interview, and, finally, playing the cassette for the class.

The ultimate goal of the above activities is to increase student ability to use the target language among themselves and with others by giving them a share of the responsibility for the material to be studied. Their personal contact with other speakers of the language has an immediacy which no professionally prepared materials can hope to duplicate. If they are to be sensitized to other cultures and to an appreciation of similarities and differences among them,[5] their contact, in person or on tape, with real individuals, speaking naturally, has the best chance of providing linguistic and cultural models with which they may feel encouraged to identify.

## A Newspaper

With respect to the written language, a target-language newspaper, published in the United States, will include numerous articles depicting American involvement abroad and target-culture activities in this country. Newspapers such as the *Journal français d'Amérique* are valuable examples of authentic language (i.e., not prepared specifically as teaching materials), which can be used at the level of intermediate conversation and composition. By judiciously selecting an article of student interest, teachers can prepare the vocabulary with students, assign the article as homework, choose a number of questions over the material, and require an oral and/or written summary as a full-class or group activity. The tie between students' own culture and that of the target language is unmistakable in this type of newspaper. The chance to discover another point of view concerning current topics of interest to Americans hopefully will lead to a measure of cultural relativity.

## Compositions

In the composition exercises that complement the conversation segment of an intermediate sequence, repetitive drill work of a purely mechanical nature should be avoided. Ideally, the written component will be a kind of writers' workshop, strengthening students' written communication skills through assigned in-class compositions. Even when these are based on a topic which permits focus on a particular grammatical area, e.g., "my daily routine," emphasizing reflexives, students may be rewarded for employing expressions encountered in the interviews and

newspapers. Prior to writing, an initial five- or ten-minute brainstorming session will provide a loose oral overview and elicit useful expressions. This may be conducted as a full-class activity when individual compositions will be written and as a team of two students in the case of cooperative compositions. Students should be allowed to consult texts and dictionaries when writing and ask questions of each other as well as the teacher. We favor the correction of compositions by means of a code (e.g., T=tense error, AUX=auxiliary[6]), and in our classes, we require that all be rewritten, with the corrections being incorporated into the final version.

## Language Weekends

One of the most successful ways to simulate the experience of living abroad is to isolate groups of American students with native speakers in week-long or weekend-long foreign language camps. A number of such French or Spanish weekends are held in Iowa for advanced high school students. French and Spanish teenagers spending the year in American schools are recruited and requested to speak only their native language with the American students. Prior to arriving at the camp, passports are prepared. Upon arrival, there is a customs check to examine passports, question why the students have come, and confiscate English language materials, including radios, for the duration of the weekend.

A full weekend of activities is planned, including singing, playing games, dancing, competing for prizes, and viewing a film, all, of course, in the target language. For many, this is the first chance to establish personal contact with young native speakers of the language being studied, and the joy of discovering that one really can communicate, albeit imperfectly, with others outside of the classroom provides a reward for the two, three, or four years of language study and the impetus to continue.

A number of college language majors serve as group leaders and give additional encouragement for the use of the target language and participation in the many planned events. They also get caught up in the spirit of the weekend, and the model they afford of the interested language user is quite valuable in motivating the high school students and keeping their use of English to a minimum.

## Travel Abroad

A visit by representatives of a class to a country where the target language is spoken, where they can in the most authentic and direct sense be immersed in the culture they have been studying, is the ultimate reinforcement and reward for students. Yet even here adequate preparations must be made if maximum benefit and enjoyment are to be derived. More than one student has turned homeward, after such an adventure, with feelings more of disappointment and disenchantment than of satisfaction and fulfillment.

It is essential, in our judgment, that a pre-departure orientation be planned. This can be accomplished through a series of special meetings or in an all-day workshop, but most effectively, perhaps, right in the classroom, and through class-related activities in which all students may participate, so that those remaining at home will also be able to take part, at least imaginatively, in the expedition.

These are some of the cultural elements that merit inclusion.

### *Prior to departure*

1. *A "tour" of the areas to be visited.* It is important to "zero in" on the specific cities and regions included in the tour. Maps, photos, slides, books and magazines, and exhibitions of products can create a sense of familiarity with the culture so that the visitors will feel less strange and foreign when they arrive. Monuments of historical, artistic, and cultural interest can often be made available in this way, and they need to be explored in some depth.
2. *Skits simulating key aspects of the target culture.* Not only should these prospective travelers go through customs, they should also have a meal in a "typical restaurant," with real menus and either authentic food or the pictures of authentic food; they should greet friends (if French or Spanish) with the Latin kiss on the cheek, or certainly with a handshake; they should be introduced to an important personage; they should accept an invitation to a dinner or party; they should be asked questions about the United States and their own state or city. . . .

***Upon arrival***

3. *Meeting friends along the way.* An invisible wall often separates the tourist from the citizen. Personal contacts provide an entryway into the culture that is difficult to find unaided, unless one spends much time in one place. If the teacher has friends, or friends of friends, somewhere along the route, any effort they can make to extend their hospitality will be of invaluable assistance.
4. *A taste of Culture with a capital C.* The average American student may not respond with much initial enthusiasm to the idea of visiting cathedrals, opera houses, art museums, or folk dance festivals, but once experienced, these become a very valued part of his or her store of treasured memories. Explanations of some of the terms that will be used by guides will help provide a sense of confidence and savoir faire. On making a tour of a Gothic cathedral, for example, students may feel very much "out of it" if they have no idea what flying buttresses are, nor any concept of the difference between a Romanesque arch and a Gothic arch. The reaction will be very different if they have become familiar with them already through pictures or slides.

***Back home***

5. *The debriefing.* Providing opportunity for these now veteran (at least in their own estimation) travelers to share their experiences with their less fortunate classmates when they return affords them proper and much appreciated recognition, enhances the cultural identification felt by their classmates, who can now picture one of their own in the foreign milieu, and supplies motivation for nonparticipants to undertake a similar venture themselves in the future.

All these activities involve an element of risk. In the filming of a videotape interview with natives, for example, care has to be taken to avoid stereotypes that imply that the target culture is either inferior or superior to the student's culture. Yet all are enthusiastically endorsed by the authors as ways of involving students in authentic language use and encouraging greater empathy for members of the target culture through

personal contact with specific people. Even though we do not claim that they are easy, foolproof, or all-inclusive, and we recognize that they would have to be tailored to the demands of the individual classroom situation, some or all of them may be attractive to other foreign language teachers, and we would welcome the opportunity to share with colleagues wishing to obtain more information.

The skits, individual presentations, and ad-lib conversations are meant to give students a chance to employ the cultural, lexical, and structural material from their intensive listening. If they succeed, it will be largely due to the model of a patient and encouraging classroom teacher who seizes every opportunity to involve students in expressing themselves in the target language. This can include simple exchanges, when bumping into students in the halls, such as *¿Has comido ya?* or *As-tu déjà mangé?* This "small talk" is far more valuable than a simple classroom drill, for it extends the language contact into the student's life. In the last analysis, when language becomes real to students, their appetite for it will be greatly increased, and it is this desire, this motivation, that will carry them across the cultural threshold.

**Notes**

1. See, for example, David E. Wolfe and Gwendolyn Jones, "Integrating Total Physical Response Strategy in a Level I Spanish Class," *Foreign Language Annals* 15 (September, 1982), pp. 273–280.
2. Wilga M. Rivers, *Teaching Foreign Language Skills*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 154.
3. See, for example, Michael D. Oates, "Should We Train Our Students to Be Spies?" *New Methodologies in Modern Language Teaching* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1979), pp. 63–69.
4. Rivers, p. 141.
5. "Improving America's Foreign Language Competence," *Today's Education* (Sept.-Oct., 1980), p. 43GS.
6. Michael D. Oates, "Cooperative Grouping in French Conversation and Composition," *Proceedings of the Second National Conference on Individualized Instruction* (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1981), pp. 201–207.

# 6
# Beyond Reading:
## Developing Visual Literacy in French[1]

Steven J. Sacco
The Ohio State University

Beverly G. Marckel
Olentangy High School, Columbus, Ohio

ED238278

Since the advent of audiolingualism in the 1960s and communicative competence in the 1970s and 1980s, reading may have become the forgotten, neglected skill.[2] The justification for emphasis on oral rather than written communication may be somewhat questionable for students having limited contact with people of the target culture. Reading can be a more widely used skill, especially if students leave our classrooms motivated to read the variety of print such as newspapers, magazines, literature, and signs. Even for the fortunate few who are able to travel to the target country, visual literacy is an important survival skill.

According to Cates and Swaffar,[3] the versatility of reading offers several benefits to the classroom teacher. First, the reading activity itself creates a student-centered environment that can take place independently of the teacher. Second, reading offers great flexibility in terms of the actual setting in which it can take place—the classroom, study hall, the library, or at home. Third, reading presents an additional opportunity for real-life language practice, thus reinforcing skills taught in the classroom.

The lack of understanding of the reading process is another major concern in addition to the de-emphasis on reading. Many view second-language reading as an activity that requires an extensive knowledge of the target language. Authentic, real-life reading can only be successfully accomplished after target language mastery. This perception of the reading process is reflected in many of our carefully constructed materials containing only vocabulary and grammar previously known to the student. Any unknown elements are usually glossed. The reading of edited

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materials continues until language mastery permits the student to read from unedited sources such as newspapers, magazines, and literature. Been[4] doubts, however, that the gap between edited and unedited text can be bridged without an intermediate step giving the student practice at processing a small quantity of unknown elements.

Another school of thought views second-language reading as a problem-solving activity in which equal emphasis is placed on one's broad experience about the topic to be read, as well as on language knowledge. Prior knowledge, an essential component often neglected in the past, enables a reader to anticipate and make predictions and inferences about the text. "Language is a valuable component," Scholl states, "but sheer knowledge of language does not assure comprehension."[5] Deficiencies in language knowledge do not necessarily preclude comprehension when reading partially edited or unedited materials. Proficiency in subject matter knowledge may compensate for these deficiencies, according to Scholl. An athlete knowledgeable in a particular sport, for example, may be able to read a sports article from *Montréal-Matin* despite having a limited vocabulary. A reader with little or no background knowledge of the content of the text, however, would find it difficult to understand regardless of his or her language mastery. It is our contention, therefore, that if materials geared to the student's prior knowledge and interest are chosen, reading from authentic, real-life sources can begin at an early level.

## Authentic, Real-Life Reading

Authentic, real-life text refers to materials containing natural language and subject matter normally read by natives. Writers of foreign language materials, however, often construct passages primarily to provide language practice rather than to convey information. Basal materials, based almost exclusively on language criteria, do not encourage the student to use fully the problem-solving skills that good readers possess, such as inferencing, contextual guessing, and making predictions, since most of the elements are already known to the student. The reading of basal materials, nevertheless, can play a role in second-language reading development. They should not, however, be the only type of material read.

Real-life reading is not confined to traditional sources such as books, nor restricted to traditional academic settings. Pearce and Ellis state that

print is found everywhere—"on walls, windows, kiosks, and vehicles, as well as in buildings and at campsites."[6] The real world is, as Smith reports, a veritable "ocean of print."[7] Phillips and Grellet[8] list the variety of material read daily by the average person. Included are newspapers, magazines, letters, signs, want ads, menus, comics, catalogues, recipes, labels, and even cereal boxes. It is apparent, therefore, that reading goes beyond the comprehension of traditional second-language materials such as literature and culture. Phillips laments the inability of students to understand commonplace signs like *solde* ("on sale"), despite their ability to read *La Chanson de Roland*.[9] Pearce and Ellis warn that "failure to observe and understand the information or request on display may lead to unnecessary inconvenience, embarrassment, or, even worse, injury."[10] The ability to extract information from visual sources in a foreign country, or "visual communicative competence" may be as important as our present emphasis on oral communicative competence.

An essential skill in native-language reading is the ability to read for different purposes. Clarke and Silberstein[11] identify four types or purposes in reading: skimming, scanning, reading for thorough comprehension, and critical reading. The reader might typically skim a newspaper or magazine article, scan a TV guide for specific information to choose a program to watch, read a textbook for thorough comprehension knowing that detailed information must be assimilated, and critically read an essay to determine the author's point of view and also to draw his or her own conclusions. It is important that the student develop the ability to read using all of the four purposes of reading. The second-language reader comes to recognize that there is more than one means of obtaining information from print; in other words, successful reading cannot be exclusively a word-for-word process.

## The Teacher's Role

The teacher must take an active role in the development of foreign language reading skills by providing the student with guidance and a sense of purpose. Phillips[12] reports that, too often in the past, many foreign language teachers would only assign pages to be read along with comprehension questions to be answered. We offer the following brief suggestions; more elaborate explanations of the teacher's role can be found in King,

Holley, and Weber; Clarke and Silberstein; Cates and Swaffar; Honeyfield; and Phillips.[13]

First, since reading requires considerable risk taking, the teacher must provide a classroom atmosphere that rewards the student for taking chances. The teacher should not always perceive mistakes negatively. Rather, the student needs to be rewarded for making decisions like guessing the meaning of cognates and unknown words, anticipating the events of a story, or making inferences. Second, the teacher should provide prereading guidance to activate the reader's prior knowledge or to build deficient background knowledge. As a prereading activity, for example, the student may be asked to make predictions about events and outcomes of the story. Third, the teacher should provide sub-skill practice such as cognate recognition and the contextual guessing of unknown words. Honeyfield[14] suggests, as a whole-class activity, that students explain to each other their strategies used to guess unknown words. Finally, the student should practice reading for different purposes.

## Inexpensive Reading Materials

Some teachers may be wondering about the expense of obtaining the reading materials needed to develop visual literacy. In this day of school budget cuts it is becoming increasingly more difficult to purchase published materials. In addition, the cost of supplying reading textbooks or other materials for every student would be astronomical. The teacher, as always, must be resourceful by capitalizing on the use of materials and realia collected over the years.

Let us take an Andy Rooney-type walk through our classrooms to assess our resources. The typical foreign language classroom might yield old *Scholastic* magazines stuffed in the bottom desk drawer, newspapers and postcards hidden in the back of the filing cabinet, examination copies of textbooks collecting dust on the shelves, and comic books and magazines piling up at the interest center. Forgotten in the library and book room are children's books, cookbooks, and works of literature, purchased in more affluent days. At home, a box in the basement might reveal old letters, ticket stubs, and travel brochures from past trips. All in all, there probably is not a classroom that would not yield some or all of these treasures.

The next task is to utilize the material on hand. Most of the following activities may be used at early levels and are based on Clarke and Silberstein's four purposes of reading.[15]

## Activities

**Want Ads**

*Purpose:* To encourage students to skim and scan.

*Materials:* Classified ads for jobs, houses, or cars.

*Method:* Have students search for a job (house, car) that meets their "skills," needs, or price range. The teacher supplies the students with a list of criteria.

*Example:* You are searching for a job that will allow you to use your knowledge of cars (gift for gab, office skills, etc.). Use classified ads from a French newspaper to find job listings that fit your skills.

**Matching Titles and Plot Outlines**

*Purpose:* To develop the ability to skim and scan.

*Materials:* Any collection of short stories.

*Method:* Students match the titles of the stories in the book to a brief plot outline. They are given a limited time to skim the stories in the book.

*Example:* "Le Laustic" Une dame est amoureuse de son voisin.[16] "Le Roi des Montagnes" Un homme raconte ses aventures à l'étranger.

*Follow-up:* Students choose one story to read.

*Variations:* Match newspaper headlines and the stories. Match fairy tales and titles. Match TV or movie titles and descriptions.

**Reading Newspaper/Magazine Articles**

*Purpose:* To skim and scan.

*Materials:* A short magazine or newspaper article that would interest students.

*Method:* The students are instructed to search for specific information before beginning to skim the article.

*Example:* Select a news article, one about an accident, for example. Pose questions such as, "Where did the accident take place?" "When did it take place?" "How many cars were involved?"

**Match the Description and the Visual**

*Purpose:* To read for detailed information.

*Materials:* Sketches or photographs of people, houses, cars, etc.

*Method:* Students read the description and find the picture that corresponds to it.
*Example:* See Figure 1.
*Variation:* Catalogues from the target country could be used. Students match the descriptions and the items. As a follow-up they could indicate which item they would buy.

**Recipe Scramble**

*Purpose:* To read for comprehension of detailed information.
*Materials:* An illustrated recipe.
*Method I:* Scramble the order of the captioned pictures. The students' task is to put the pictures in the correct order.
*Method II:* Keep the illustrations in the correct order but scramble the order of the text. The task is to match the text and illustrations.
*Follow-up:* Students prepare a simple dish in class or at home, following the recipe.
*Variations:* Sewing or simple construction projects may be substituted for recipes.

**Cartoon Scramble**

*Materials:* A scrambled cartoon. Cartoons with interchangeable sections should be avoided.
*Method:* Students are to put the squares in the logical order. They must rely on adverbs of time as well as other frames of reference.
*Example:* Any cartoon from a foreign language newspaper that has several sequential panels can be used.
*Variation:* The text can be removed from the bubbles. Students must put the captions in the correct order.

**Figure 1**[17]

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**Postcards**[18]

*Purpose:* To use prior knowledge of language to fill in missing elements.

*Material:* A postcard with some words blotted out by "rain."

*Method:* Students must try to reconstruct the message, inferencing the meaning of incomplete words.

**Chinese Gin**[19]

*Purpose:* To help students recognize related phrases.

*Materials:* Pairs of cards containing paraphrases, prepared by the teacher.

*Method:* The game may be played by groups of two to six. Seven cards are dealt to each player. The game is played much like gin. The object of the game is to match pairs of related phrases.

*Example:* *Il se dirige vers la gare.* + *Il va prendre un train.* ("He is headed for the station." + "He is going to take a train.")

**Film Review**

*Purpose:* To encourage students to read critically.

*Materials:* A film review from a foreign language magazine or newspaper.

*Method:* Students are to decide whether or not the author liked the film. If it is a film they have seen, possibly an American film, they can also state whether or not they agree with the review.

**Baby Pictures**[20]

*Purpose:* To encourage students to read for comprehension and to use their prior knowledge.

*Materials:* Baby pictures of the students and their guided compositions.

*Method:* Students write descriptions of themselves, giving their age and interests. The final, unsigned compositions, corrected by the teacher, are mounted on construction paper along with the students' pictures. The day of the reading exercise, students are seated in a circle. Each student has a list of classmates on which he or she will record the corresponding number of the composition. The pictures are distributed and each student has one minute to read each before passing it on. At the end of the activity, the identities are revealed and a prize may be awarded to the student with the most correct answers. This activity is even more fun if the teacher includes his or her own picture.

*Example:* Student's composition: *J'ai quatorze ans. J'habite Powell. J'ai les cheveux blonds et les yeux bleus. J'ai un frère et deux sœurs. J'aime la musique rock. Je joue du piano.* Teacher's composition: *Je n'ai pas quatorze ans. J'ai un frère mais je n'ai pas de sœurs. Je déteste la musique rock. J'habite Delaware.*

In addition to the aforementioned activities, the teacher might further capitalize on his or her collection of realia by stripping foreign language newspapers and magazines. Most newspapers, for example, contain a multitude of possible reading materials, such as headlines, feature stories, sports, weather reports, an advice column, editorials, horoscopes, want ads, serial stories, comics, word games, and TV and movie sections. Although any French newspaper would be an invaluable source of reading material, Quebecois newspapers like *Montréal-Matin* might be more relevant to the American student because the news and sports are similar to those found in American papers. The sports-minded student can enjoy articles on baseball, football, basketball, and tennis, while the student with other interests can read familiar North American and world news. In addition, *Le Journal français D'amérique*, specifically written for Americans, presents articles appealing to a wide variety of interests: cooking, cinema, music, news, and interviews.

The foreign language teacher may also select interesting materials from French magazines like *Salut!*, *Paris-Match*, and *Télé 7 jours*. *Salut!*, the French magazine for teenagers, offers movie reviews, pen-pal letters, horoscopes, and interviews with American, British, and French entertainers. *Paris-Match* has features focusing on people, world and national news, and past events. *Télé 7 jours* offers detailed information about TV programs and movies.

For the teacher with an adequate budget, we highly recommend Pearce and Ellis' *French Sign Language*, an excellent source of materials for teaching visual literacy. Also, for teachers who do not already have access to francophone newspapers and magazines. Schulz' ditto masters on newspapers and Jorstad's ditto masters on magazines are recommended.[21]

## Summary and Conclusions

It is clear that there are many options in the development of reading skills besides the use of the textbook. Reading must go beyond the traditional curriculum if our students are to become visually literate. We advocate a problem-solving approach to visual communicative competence whereby the student uses his or her knowledge of the world and the target language. In this approach, the student can begin to read authentic, real-life materials at a very early level. The student needs to develop more

versatile reading techniques such as skimming, scanning, reading for thorough comprehension, and critical reading if he or she is to become an independent reader. By utilizing a variety of resources, including a collection of realia, the teacher can present an interesting, inexpensive, and stimulating reading program.

**Notes**

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3. G. Cates and J. Swaffar, "Reading a Second Language," ERIC:ED 176 588, September 1979, p. 4.
4. Sheila Been, "Reading in the Foreign Language Program," *TESOL Quarterly* 9 (1975), p. 233.
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11. Mark A. Clarke and Sandra Silberstein, "Toward a Realization of Psycho-Linguistic Principles in the ESL Reading Class," *Language Learning* 27 (1977), pp. 143–145.
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14. J. Honeyfield, "Simplification," p. 439.
15. Clarke and Silberstein, pp.-143–145.
16. These examples are taken from *Pot-Pourri de littérature française*, R. de Roussy de Sales, Ed. (Skokie, IL: National Textbook Company, 1982).
17. From *Ça Va* (Scholastic, Inc.), September-October, 1982.
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# 7
# The Teaching of Spanish Object Pronouns:
## A Communicative Approach

**Oscar Ozete**
**Indiana State University, Evansville**

Object pronouns frequently pose problems with regard to their form, function, and placement in a sentence. Third-person direct and indirect objects, in particular, have been a thorny problem, since Spanish speakers in this instance distinguish between the two for purposes of case function and dialectical preferences. This paper proposes to examine current usage of third-person direct and indirect object pronouns, while suggesting techniques and graded exercises that stress the practical, communicative function of these pronouns.

### Direct Object Pronouns

An examination of thirty first-year college texts shows that authors on the whole do not capitalize on the similarity of forms between definite articles and direct object pronouns.

| Articles | Direct Object Pronouns |
|---|---|
| la señora | La veo. |
| las señoras | Las veo. |
| los señores | Los veo.[1] |

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Drills could be designed to reflect the similarities and subsequently broadened to include the difference in the masculine singular: *¿El señor? Lo veo*. Remarks from the teacher could include the following.

1. The direct object answers the questions *what?* or *whom?*
   They're buying a calculator.

*What* are they buying?
Mr. Pérez helps Esteban and Luis.
*Whom* does Mr. Pérez help?

2. If reflexive pronouns have already been presented, (e.g., *¿Cómo te llamas?*), the explanation could state that Spanish direct objects are the same as the reflexive pronouns with the exception of the third-person singular and plural. The latter are identical to the definite articles, except for *lo*.

Exercises could be grouped around a vocabulary theme, and students, in pairs, could ask and answer each other's questions.

*Model:* ¿Escribes la tarea?
Sí, la escribo. No, no la escribo.

A. escribir: la tarea, las palabras, los verbos, el vocabulario, la frase, el examen, los ejercicios
B. conocer: al Sr. Ruiz, a su esposa, a sus hijos, a su hermano, a su hermana, a su sobrino, a sus padres
C. querer usar (¿Quieres usar el teléfono? Si, quiero usarlo.): el teléfono, la computadora, la calculadora, los casetes, la grabadora, los discos, la máquina de escribir, el copiador, el dictáfono

To provide practice with first- and second-person pronouns, students, once more in pairs, can ask and answer each other's questions.

*Model:* ¿Me esperas?
Sí, te espero. No, no te espero.

The teacher could supply a list of transitive verbs that might include *esperar, ayudar, necesitar, comprender, entender (e-ie), creer, llamar, invitar, llevar, escuchar, ver, conocer, recordar (o-ue), buscar*. The previous exercise could be recast in the formal by having the teacher pose the questions and the students answering him or her in the polite form.

Teacher: ¿Me espera Ud.? ¿Me esperas?
Student: Sí, lo (la) espero a Ud.

For expansion exercises the teacher may ask two or three questions based on a situation.

1. ¿Me espera Ud.?
   ¿Dónde me espera?
   ¿A qué hora me espera?

2. ¿Nos invitas a la reunión?
   ¿Qué día nos invitas?
   ¿A qué hora nos invitas?

Care should be taken in exercise preparation to avoid patterns that have low frequency of occurrence. Specifically, the sequence direct object pronoun + verb + *a* + noun, as in *d* and *e* below, has limited acceptability.[2]

¿A Jorge?
a. Sí, lo conocemos.
b. Sí, lo conocemos a él.
c. Sí, a Jorge lo conocemos.
d. Sí, lo conocemos a Jorge.
e. Sí, lo conocemos al muchacho.

## Object Pronoun Placement

With regard to object pronoun placement, in a two-verb sequence, textbooks recommend inserting the pronouns before the conjugated verb or attaching them to the infinitive or present participle. For the present time, this rule seems adequate, since authorities disagree on the placement of the pronoun. Keniston stated that if a verb phrase in the progressive tense is felt to be a unit, i.e., if *está mirando* is considered as the equivalent of *mira*, the pronoun will precede the auxiliary *estar*. On the other hand, if the two verbs are viewed as two distinct expressions, the pronoun will be affixed to the present participle, e.g., *anda buscándolo*.[3] By contrast, Bull contended that the tendency has been to attach the pronoun to the participle.[4]

To study object pronoun placement in various two-verb sequences, this writer examined seven contemporary novels in their entirety.[5] The data as a whole indicated that the novelists in 55% of the samples attached the object pronoun at the end of the verbal phrase. However, parceling out the data for the present participles showed that authors by and large (162 samples to 43, or 79% of the occurrences) prefer to embed object pronouns before the auxiliary in the progressive tense, thus corroborating Keniston's findings. Moreover, with the idiomatic expression *ir a* + infinitive, authors in 71% of the samples preferred to insert the pronoun before the verbal phrase. Therefore, in pattern practice, where pronoun placement may either precede or preferably follow the verbal phrase, drills

with the progressive and *ir a* + infinitive constructions should be skewed in favor of pre-verbal insertion of the pronouns.

In constructions where the auxiliary verb has an accompanying infinitive, normally two object pronouns appear together either before or after the verbal phrase, e.g., *Debo dárselo a ellos* or *Se lo debo dar a ellos*. ("I should give it to them.") However, with a non-auxiliary and an infinitive, object pronoun placement may require semantic considerations. For example, a reflexive verb retains the pronoun associated with it, while the infinitive attracts the pronoun affiliated with it in meaning: *Carmen se levantó a verlos*. ("Carmen got up to see them.") In nonreflexive constructions, pronoun insertion depends on the meaning intended, and as a consequence each pronoun accompanies the verb it identifies with semantically, as in *Me invitan a salir* and not *Invitan a salirme*. ("They invite me to go out.")

***Contention between lo(s) and le(s)***

With verbs of perception (*oír*, *ver*, *mirar*, *sentir*, and so on), authorities disagree on the case the object pronoun should take. They concur that it should be direct object when the following verb has no object complement, e.g., *Lo vi escribiendo*. ("I saw him writing.") By the same token, they differ when the accompanying verb is transitive: *Lo (le) vi escribiendo la carta*. ("I saw him writing the letter.") Nine native speakers when questioned on these items mainly accepted *lo* with intransitive verbs, the former example, and *le* with transitive verbs, the latter example.

Another point of contention between *lo(s)* and *le(s)* occurs in impersonal *se* constructions, e.g., *¿A los niños? Se les tutea*. ("The children? They are addressed familiarly.") Bello and Lenz labeled the pronoun as dative, whereas Gili Gaya labeled it accusative. Notwithstanding, they all endorsed *le(s)* with masculine antecedents.[6] By contrast, opinion is split when the direct object has a feminine antecedent. The *Real Academia española* and Gili Gaya stipulate that the pronoun is realized as *la(s)*; for example, *Se las llama declarativas* (*las oraciones*). ("They are called declaratives [sentences].")[7] To pursue this point the sentences below were presented to the nine native informants.

(A las hijas) No se les tomará en cuenta.
(A las hijas) No se las tomará en cuenta.
("[The daughters] They won't be taken into consideration.")

No se le entiende a ella.
No se la entiende a ella.
("She's not understood.")

Speakers varied in their choices. Those from countries bordering on the Caribbean (Costa Rica, Cuba, and Venezuela) preferred *le(s)*, whereas the Argentinean, Paraguayan, and Peruvian selected *la(s)*. The two informants from Madrid canceled each other, with the language major opting for *las* and the business major for *les*. Seemingly, with impersonal *se* constructions, speakers vary between *le/la* for the feminine accusative. They do so not only by dialect but by idiolect as well. Consequently, in the more advanced courses where these items appear, the *le(s)* forms should be stressed, e.g., *Se le entiende a él* ("He is understood"), while still accommodating the *la(s)* forms for the feminine accusative.

## Indirect Object Pronouns

Preliminary classroom explanations could include the following.

1. The indirect object answers the questions *to whom?* or *for whom?*
   English may omit the prepositions.
   They gave the recipe to me.
   They gave me the recipe.
   To whom?
   I'm buying a gift for her.
   I'm buying her a gift.
   For whom?
2. Spanish indirect object pronouns are the same as the reflexive and direct object pronouns, with the exception of the third-person singular and plural. These become *le* and *les*, respectively, and do not reflect gender.
3. A prepositional phrase *(a mí, a ti, a él, a Julia, a los García)* may be added for emphasis or clarity. These prepositional phrases should not be used without their accompanying indirect object pronouns.

Normative rules for Spanish frown upon the use of an indirect object noun without its corresponding object pronoun: *¡Pregúntele a Roberto!* and not *¡Pregunte a Roberto!* Hence, drills commonly found in textbooks, cuing

the indirect object pronoun in the format *Escribo a María.* → *Le escribo.* should be reworded; for example, *¿A María?* → *Le escribo* or *Le escribo a María*, where from the outset students become accustomed to the redundancy in this construction.

Pattern exercises of a creative nature could again revolve around a vocabulary theme such as foods or office items. For example:

A. Make 15 or more original sentences using one item from each column. Columns 1 and 4 must be in agreement.
*Modelo:* La sirvienta *les* prepara pollo *a ellos.*

| | *1* | *2* | *3* | *4* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| La sirvienta | me | sirve | la sopa | a mí |
| | te | trae | la carne | a ti |
| | nos | prepara | el arroz | a nosotros(as) |
| | le | hace | el arroz con pollo | a él, ella, Ud. |
| | les | cocina | las enchiladas | a ellos, ellas, |
| | | calienta | el pescado | Uds. |
| | | da | los frijoles | |

B. Make 15 or more original sentences using the following columns. Again columns 1 and 4 must agree.
*Modelo:* Ellos *les* envían el recibo *a los clientes.*

| | *1* | *2* | *3* | *4* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ellos | te | envían | la carta | a ti |
| | me | enseñan | el recibo | a mí |
| | nos | entregan | las cuentas | a nosotros(as) |
| | le | devuelven | los informes | a él, ella, la |
| | les | piden | los papeles | señora, Ud., |
| | | escriben | la lista | Ricardo |
| | | prestan | el anuncio | a ellos, ellas, |
| | | | las invitaciones | Uds. |
| | | | el circular de propaganda | a los clientes |

Verbs of communication (e.g., *preguntar, contestar, informar, notificar, decir*—but not *llamar*) could be practiced in cued responses such as: *Marta me escribió ayer. ¿Quién te (le) escribió? ¿Cuándo te (le) escribió? ¿Le escribió Marta a tu amigo?* For pattern practice, incorporat-

ing both direct and indirect objects, the teacher could distribute among the students props or flash cards that review basic vocabulary (nouns). The teacher then would pose, initially in the *tú* form, the following series of questions requesting the various items: *¿Quién tiene el dinero? ¿Me lo prestas? ¿Me lo prestas ahora o luego? ¿Cuándo me lo prestas? ¿A quién le prestas el dinero?* Thereafter, other transitive verbs could be substituted according to context (*dar, traer, enseñar, prestar, regalar, alcanzar,* and *servir*).

For more advanced manipulative exercises, stick figures drawn on the board and used in conjunction with questions that depict the action of the figures could readily facilitate the learning of the pronouns, especially in the conversion of *le(s)* to *se* before a direct object pronoun. Jorge could be drawn on the left and Carlos on the right. Teresa, in the middle, holds out a magazine to Jorge and a newspaper to Carlos. Possible questions to ask include the following.

1. ¿Qué la da Teresa a Jorge—la revista o el periódico?
2. ¿Le da Teresa la revista a Carlos?
3. ¿Se la da a Carlos?
4. ¿Me da la revista a mí?
5. ¿Te la da a ti?
6. ¿Se la da a Ud. (Uds.)?
7. ¿A quién le da Teresa el periódico?
8. ¿Se lo da a Jorge?
9. ¿Le da Carlos el periódico a Jorge?
10. ¿Quién le da el periódico a Carlos?

The previous exercise could be modified with an additional figure to represent a plural indirect object, the verb could be changed to *prestar* or *enseñar*, and items could be changed to *papeles, cartas*, and so forth.

To test recognition skills, a multiple-choice cloze could be adapted from a reading passage:

> Juanito siempre ( los / les / las ) presta sus cosas a sus amigos y muchas veces ellos no ( les / los / se ) las devuelven. Y cuando él ( se / les / las ) pide algo a ellos, ellos no ( le / lo / la ) dan nada. Ahora acaba de prestar ( la / le / se ) su pluma a Pedro, su diccionario a María y en este momento Pirimpimpín ( lo / la / le ) está pidiendo el reloj. Estoy seguro de que Juanito ( se le / se lo / lase ) va a prestar, y Pirimpimpín no ( lo / le / se ) va a devolver el reloj. ¡Pobre Juanito![8]

To test recall skills, the traditional fill-in-the-blank cloze could be administered (*Juanito siempre _____ presta sus cosas a sus amigos* and so on).

Verbs like *gustar*, *doler*, *parecer*, and *faltar* that require the structure indirect object pronoun + verb + subject should be practiced more fully once the indirect objects have been mastered. Students should note that *gustar* means "to be pleasing." In the sentence *Me gustan los programas* we are literally saying "The programs are pleasing to me." This translates better into "I like the programs." The definite article needs to accompany the noun (subject), since in Spanish noun subjects normally do not stand alone. Compare: *Los niños hablan* with the incorrect *Niños hablan*. For variety, the previous verbs could be practiced in situational exercises. For example:

A. Ask a classmate if he or she likes the following for dessert.
*Modelo:* ¿Te gustan las manzanas?
Sí, me gustan. No, no me gustan.
(las peras, los mangos, el melón, las bananas, las uvas, las naranjas, el queso, el pudín, la sopapilla)

B. You have the flu. Tell the doctor what hurts you.
*Modelo:* Doctor(a), me duele(n) _____ .
(los oídos, la garganta, los brazos, todo el cuerpo, el estómago, los músculos, el pecho, la espalda)

C. You and a friend are shopping for clothes. Ask what he or she thinks of the various items you are picking. Use the nouns and adjectives provided.
*Modelo:* ¿Qué te parece la camisa?
("What do you think of the shirt?" Literally, "How does the shirt seem to you?")
Me parece bonita.
("I think it's pretty." "It seems pretty to me.")

| *Nouns* | | *Adjectives* |
|---|---|---|
| la corbata | el traje | bonito/feo |
| los pantalones | los zapatos | caro/barato |
| la chaqueta | las sandalias | grande/pequeño |
| la blusa | los tenis | largo/corto |
| la falda | el suéter | bueno/malo |
| el vestido | las camisetas | fino/grueso |

## Meanings of the Indirect Object

Of the college textbooks examined for this study, the majority stipulate that the prepositions *to* and *for* serve to mark the indirect object in English. A few of the books include the preposition *from*, and add that often the indirect object indicates persons for whom a service or disservice is performed. On a broader scale, Bull stated that both languages have verbs which, from the point of view of the subject (doer), describe the movement of an object away from the subject toward the indirect object; for example, *mandar*, *dar*, *tirar*, and *echar*. Conversely, he added, the two languages have verbs that describe the reverse, that is, movement away from the indirect object toward the subject, as in *quitar*, *robar*, *comprar*, and *llevarse*.[9] In the first category, English may employ either syntax or relators to mark the indirect object: "I gave Harry the check." "I gave it to him." Typical verbs in this category are *lend*, *offer*, *write*, *send*, *teach*, *owe*, and *pay*. However, there is a sub-category of these verbs, like *explain*, that rejects the word order (indirect + direct object) and instead calls for the prepositional phrase: "I explained the problem to Linda" and not "I explained Linda the problem." Verbs in this subclass include *return*, *deliver*, *demonstrate*, *describe*, *announce*, *address*, and *communicate*.[10]

In the second verb category (movement away from the indirect object), English requires the preposition of separation *from* ("They stole the money from Harry"). Spanish does not need to distinguish between these two opposite movements with a preposition. Yet, with verbs not overtly denoting the direction of the movement, real ambiguity results in the language; thus, *comprárselo a él* has the equivalents "to buy it for (from) him." Meaning must be derived from larger context. Consequently, translation drills to reinforce the notions of *to*, *for*, and *from* could be pursued with verbs like *comprar*, *vender*, *dar*, *quitar*, and *robar* as in:

> Le compro el reloj a Dolores.
> "I'm buying Dolores the watch." "I'm buying the watch from Dolores." "I'm buying the watch for Dolores."

Besides indicating the relationships *to*, *for*, or *from*, the indirect object may also imply possession, e.g., *Pablo le rompe la bicicleta a Julio.* ("Pablo breaks Julio's bicycle.") This sentence, in addition to implying

disservice to the indirect object, also indicates ownership. By contrast, the paraphrase with *de*, *Pablo rompe la bicicleta de Julio* focuses on the notion of possession. The meaning of possession most likely prevails when the direct object is customarily associated with the person involved (the indirect object), e.g., *Le lavé la cara al niño* ("I washed the boy's face") or *Me robaron la cartera* ("They stole my wallet"). Normally, the direct object in these constructions is preceded by the definite article, rendered by a possessive form in English. The majority of these possessive situations entail clothing or body parts, although not exclusively. For classroom practice, an English cued-response drill could be used; for example: *Me lava la ropa*. (She buys my shirts. She fixes my tie. She takes my temperature. She makes my dinner. She cleans my room.)[11]

When the context (verb) implies service or benefit to someone, the indirect object may be paraphrased, using a prepositional phrase headed by *para*. For example:

Gloria le hizo una camisa a Juanito.
("Gloria made Juanito a shirt.")
Gloria hizo una camisa para Juanito.
("Gloria made a shirt for Juanito.")

Similar situations could be encountered with the verbs *traer*, *buscar*, *mandar*, *enviar*, *dejar*, and *conseguir*.

## Closing Comments

It should be kept in mind that speakers on both sides of the Atlantic occasionally, for reasons of style, imitation of peninsular Spanish, or personal preference, may sway between *lo* and *le*. However, this should not detract from teaching *lo* as direct object and *le* as indirect object as part of the core of the language. The distinction would reflect usage in the majority of Spanish speakers who live in the western hemisphere. More importantly for the classroom, object pronouns should not be treated as isolated items in the syllabus. They should be continually reintroduced and their meanings in the communicative process amplified as new verb forms and tenses are presented in this vibrant and multicultural language.

**Notes**

1. Juanita Carfora, "*Lo* and *Le* in American Spanish," *Hispania* 51 (1968), pp. 300–302.
2. Hayward Keniston, *Spanish Syntax List* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1960), pp. 65–67. Keniston states that the use of the redundant pronoun is more frequent with an indirect than a direct object, and he explains this by surmising that persons are more likely to be the indirect than the direct object of an action. Further on he adds that when the direct object follows the verb, omission of the redundant pronoun is the rule.
   To ascertain what native speakers would deem appropriate, the following sentences were submitted to nine informants from Spain and Latin America:
   a. A Jorge no lo conocemos.
   b. No lo conocemos a Jorge.
   c. No le conocemos a Jorge.
   Eight of the informants favored *a*; five of these also accepted *b*; the two from Spain preferred *c*.
3. Keniston, p. 70.
4. William E. Bull, *Spanish for Teachers: Applied Linguistics* (New York: The Ronald Press, 1965), p. 201.
5. The seven novels represented authors from different dialect areas of Spanish.
   Miguel Angel Asturias, *El señor presidente* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, S.A., 1964).
   Alejo Carpentier, *Los pasos perdidos* (México: Compañía General de Ediciones, S.A., 1966).
   Camilo José Cela, *La colmena* (Barcelona: Editorial Noguer, S.A., 1967).
   Miguel Delibes, *Cinco horas con Mario* (Barcelona: Ediciones Destino, 1969).
   Gabriel García Márquez, *Cien años de soledad* (Barcelona: Editorial Argor, S.A., 1980).
   Juan Rulfo, *Pedro Páramo* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1965).
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6. Andrés Bello and Rufino J. Cuervo, *Gramática de la lengua castellana* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sopena, 1970), p. 266. Rodolfo Lenz, *La oración y sus partes* (Santiago: 1944), p. 88. Samuel Gili Gaya, *Curso superior de sintaxis española* (Barcelona: Bibliograf, S.A., 1973), p. 129.
7. Gili Gaya, p. 129.
8. Guillermo Segreda and James W. Harris, *Spanish: Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1976), p. 168.
9. Bull, *Spanish for Teachers*, pp. 258–259.
10. D. J. Allerton, "Generating Indirect Objects in English," *Journal of Linguistics* 14 (1978), pp. 21–33.
11. Bárbara Kaminar de Mujica and Guillermo Segreda, *A-LM Spanish: Level One* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1969), p. 167.

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# 8

# Applying Microcomputers in the Foreign Language Classroom:

## Challenges and Opportunities

**Millie Mellgren**
**University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln Public Schools**

Computers have rapidly become a major resource for foreign language teachers and students. Growing acceptance and availability of microcomputers for classroom applications challenges us to develop means to incorporate computer technology into instructional programs. Although computers are effective and offer diverse instructional applications, certain barriers have emerged that prevent the utilization of computer technology in foreign language classrooms.

A national survey in 1974 reported nearly one quarter of public schools utilized computers in some way for instruction.[1] Approximately one half of elementary and secondary schools now use computers to augment instructional programs[2] and nearly 75% of all elementary and secondary schools are expected to use computers in classrooms by 1985.[3] Computers will clearly be available for classroom use by teachers prepared to adapt them to their various instructional styles and techniques.

The unique interactional nature of the microcomputer has impressed and fascinated young people. Students familiar with video arcades, programmed toys, and computer games are motivated and intrigued by computers and their many uses. As students gain more experience with computers it will be increasingly valuable for teachers to capitalize on this enthusiasm by supplementing their classroom instruction with computer activities. While teachers generally seem enthusiastic about introducing computers in their classes, many are uncertain and apprehensive about the

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process and their own relationship as teachers to the new technology. Rather than viewing the computer as another form of media, like a projector, tape recorder, or video recorder, some teachers are cautious or even hostile to equipment they feel threatens their classroom role.

Lack of information underlies teacher reluctance to supplement instruction with computer programs. Teachers without training tend to avoid computers and develop negative attitudes toward this particular teaching tool. Solvieg Olsen found in a 1979 survey of language departments in American colleges that misinformation, biases, and fears were major sources of negativism toward computer use. Teachers with actual computer experience were favorable and enthusiastic about the utility of microcomputers in teaching.[4]

A survey of teachers attending the Nebraska Foreign Language Association meeting in April, 1982 revealed that only four percent of the respondents used computers in their classrooms even though two-thirds of the respondents had access to computers in their schools. Nearly 90% of those surveyed reported their schools have microcomputers although many teachers had not inquired about their availability for use in foreign language classes. The survey indicated that over 80% of the respondents wanted to use microcomputers in their classes. Almost all of these teachers had access to computers but still were not incorporating their use into the instructional program. A common explanation for not using computers was lack of information and training. Less than 40% of those surveyed reported they had any training relating to microcomputers and only 15% of the teachers indicated any knowledge of computer programming.

Teacher training at both the pre-service and in-service levels has not been adequate in providing information about developments and innovations in microcomputer applications. Undergraduate teacher training and continuing education programs could be augmented and strengthened by the inclusion of formal computer course offerings or requirements. A practical method for encouraging teachers in training to include a computer course in their program of study is to increase computer awareness among student advisers and teacher training personnel. Computer literacy, programming, and implementation workshops or courses can be provided by schools themselves or local foreign language organizations. Local college, university, or business school systems represent additional resources for individual teachers interested in expanding their computing

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horizons. As teachers become more familiar and knowledgeable about the teaching opportunities computers represent, we can expect more confident and positive attitudes from teachers and students alike.

The Nebraska teacher survey results also suggested that teachers are not using computers because of a shortage of available software. Since most teachers are not trained in microcomputer programming there is a great dependence on ready-to-use programs. Because of the rapid pace of most foreign language classes, even teachers skilled at programming often do not have time to prepare adequate materials for their classes. Nearly all of the surveyed foreign language teachers indicated they were unaware of supplies of software available for use in their classes.

Software is, however, being produced and distributed for teaching applications. Organizations such as the Minnesota Educational Computing Consortium (MECC) and CONDUIT of the University of Iowa have produced a variety of quality software. Computer manufacturers, textbook companies, and suppliers of educational materials are also developing and marketing new software. Some school districts and educational organizations have developed software libraries, and we can expect to see more pooling and local availability of software. Increasingly computer-wise teachers will themselves develop software for specific applications, tailoring programs to meet group or individual needs of students. Teachers can reproduce and trade software with colleagues informally on an individual basis or in workshop or conference settings. Students can also be involved in program development in which they aid the teacher, become challenged, and reinforce previously learned material. For example, for a student to write a good program on subjunctive verb tenses, he or she must review the subjunctive mood and its uses.

Previously unavailable aids and alternatives are offered to foreign language education by the great potential the computer represents. Computer-Assisted Instruction (CAI) can provide tutorial instruction, individualized instruction, a highly controlled learning process, and remedial work or practice and review. CAI decreases unchecked errors and requires thorough and accurate work from the student.

A unique feature of CAI is the immediacy and variety of feedback in which the student is corrected on each example. Some programs simply respond "right" or "wrong," usually in a personalized manner. For example, responses such as *magnífico*, *Bueno*, *Tomás*, or *No Lupe, otra vez, por*

*favor* encourage the student to succeed with the program. Programs in which a variety of student responses are possible present feedback sequentially, so that hints are given to guide students in reaching the correct answer on their own. In some cases, a simple response is given to the student and more information is provided only on request, giving the student some control over the learning process.[5] The feedback process is thus geared to each student's own learning style. Feedback in stages leads the individual student through the lesson material at his or her own pace, positively reinforcing the student and individualizing the presentation of the lesson.

Computer-Assisted Instruction assumes a variety of formats: drill and practice, tutorials, testing, simulations, games, and dialogue. Drill and practice programs are currently the most popular because they are easy to write and use, complementing classroom teaching by providing practice on basic skills as well as review. Tutorials are also popular because they present material to students relative to their rate of learning. Norman Watts called the computer a patient tutor continually present to monitor student progress.[6]

Computer simulations are significant learning tools because they resemble real-life situations and stimulate student involvement. Although simulations are possible without the computer, planning and implementation of simulations take a great amount of time.[7] The computer can provide a variety and large number of simulations within a compact time frame. Historical reenactments, current events, daily life-styles, and special holidays could be modeled on the computer. For example, a café in Paris, a market in Mexico City, a bullfight in Madrid, and a festival in Munich could all be brought to life in a computer simulation. Situational simulations supplement and reinforce the regular program of instruction while enriching the educational process.

The computer can be extremely helpful in testing. Test construction, scoring, and evaluation can all be done by the computer. As clerical duties are lifted from the teacher's responsibilities, more time can be devoted to innovative instruction, personal and professional growth, and personalized work with students.

Research since the 60s has consistently shown that CAI is successful in helping students achieve specified learning objectives. Reductions in learning time of 20–40% have been realized and retention is as good or

better than with conventional methods.[8] Improvement of student attitudes may represent the most significant result of computer use. A study in a University of Iowa Spanish class revealed high attitudes exemplified by class attendance, student performance, and test results.[9] Most students are enthusiastic about using computers to supplement classwork. Clement found that students experienced with CAI remain positive over a long period of time and spend more time than required working on programs.[10] Computers have great potential for increasing motivation and creating a positive classroom atmosphere by generating student enthusiasm for learning.

## Conclusion

Surveys indicate that while most teachers have access to microcomputers, the majority have not applied computer technology in their classrooms. Some teachers are apprehensive and negative toward computers; however, in many cases this is reflective more of lack of information and training and a perceived shortage of software than it is a rejection of computer applications. Computers are effective in providing a variety of instructional aids, creating positive learning experiences, and improving student attitudes. The unique feedback, variety, and efficiency characteristics of microcomputers applied in classrooms offer significant challenges and opportunities to teachers and students to grow along with technology in foreign language education.

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# 9
# Foreign Language Arts in the Grades:
## A Conceptual Approach (F.L.A.G.)[1]

**Rosemarie A. Benya**
East Central University, Ada, Oklahoma

**Bettye L. Myer**
SUNY-Fredonia, Fredonia, New York

This article (based on an unpublished curriculum guide developed in 1979 by Melba D. Woodruff, Richard Beery, Michael Evans, and the authors) proposes one option for teaching foreign languages in the elementary schools: *Foreign Language Arts in the Grades: A Conceptual Approach (F.L.A.G.)*. The characteristics, goals, and objectives of this program will be discussed after a brief general introduction and description of the three principal types of elementary school programs—immersion, partial immersion, and "core." Questions designed to aid the process of program development will be raised, and examples from a conceptual approach toward learning a foreign language will be given. Unique to this approach are interdisciplinary cooperation and flexibility to meet the interests and needs of the learners and teachers involved.

### Introduction

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In the late 1960s and 1970s the noticeable drop in enrollment in foreign language classes aroused concern among American educators and politicians. In 1979 the Presidential Commission that was established to evaluate the "state of foreign languages and international studies and their impact on the nation's internal and external strength"[2] reported an alarming deterioration in the language and research capacity of the United States. One of the recommendations proposed by the Commission was a

program of foreign language instruction to begin in the elementary school and extend over a *long* period of time. A survey taken to report to this Commission indicated that 75% of American adults who were questioned favored the teaching of foreign languages in the elementary schools.[3] The question of how such a program can be implemented and financed is central to the issue.

Long-standing, successful elementary school foreign language programs do exist throughout the nation in public and private schools. (For example, West Hartford, Connecticut; Shaker Heights, Ohio; University Heights, Ohio; All Saints Episcopal Day School, Carmel, California) Several state education departments are at present evaluating their foreign language education programs with a view of extending foreign language study into the elementary grades. At this writing, the New York State Board of Regents is considering a plan entitled "Education for a Global Perspective" at all levels of instruction. This plan proposes several options for foreign language proficiency in the elementary school, one of which is a statewide test of proficiency at the end of grade 6.[4] The State Department of Public Instruction in North Carolina is conducting a foreign language curriculum study to determine what programs exist and ought to exist. Foreign Language Supervisor Toussaint indicates that the state has foreign language proficiency, emphasizing communications skills, as a goal for elementary school foreign language instruction.[5]

## Immersion, Partial Immersion, and "Core" Programs

Elementary school foreign language programs fall into three major types: immersion, partial immersion, and "core" self-contained classrooms.

*Immersion programs* utilize a foreign language as the *medium of instruction* for other subject areas such as math, science, social studies, music, and art. In 1981, Tulsa, Oklahoma initiated a pilot Spanish immersion program patterned after successful French-Canadian immersion programs. In Tulsa's Spanish immersion program at Eliot Elementary School, children receive instruction in Spanish during the entire day in kindergarten and grades 1 and 2. In grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 the children will be

instructed in English for half of the school day and in Spanish during the other half.

Some school systems offer *partial immersion* programs in which part of the instruction takes place in the second language and part in English. As in a total immersion program, the children are learning some of their basic subjects with the second language as the medium of instruction rather than as a goal of instruction. (For example, Cincinnati, Ohio Bilingual/Bicultural Program; Learning Unlimited, an experimental language school in Columbus, Ohio, with the projected goal of partial immersion.)

A great many school systems have implemented *core* programs in which children receive instruction in the foreign language several times a week for periods of time ranging from fifteen minutes to an hour per meeting. Many variations of this approach exist, depending on the personnel and resources available. (For example, three Oklahoma City schools: Quail Creek, Sequoyah, and Stonegate; Boulevard Magnet School in Cleveland Heights, Ohio)

At present, there does not seem to be any conclusive evidence as to what length of instruction time results in greater student achievement. There are advantages and disadvantages to each approach. The Canadian experience in French instruction has indicated that total immersion and partial immersion programs are far superior to the early "core" programs that involved a short foreign language lesson apart from the rest of the curriculum. Swain identified several factors that appear to contribute to the lesser degree of success of the "core" program. Among them are the following: time was lost in moving from class to class; foreign language study was not integrated into the rest of the curriculum; the foreign language instructor was not integrated into the school faculty; frequently discipline was a problem; also, the burden of many classes at many grade levels tended to overtax the abilities and physical stamina of the hardiest language teacher.[6] In the United States it has been noted that FLES teachers without experience in teaching elementary school children tended to have less success when assigned at that level. If most school districts in the United States are to implement a foreign language program, the pitfalls of the early Canadian core programs and past FLES experiences in the United States need to be considered.

## Factors to Consider in Implementing Programs

As administrators and foreign language instructors evaluate the options available for implementing programs, they will need to answer the following questions.

1. What level of language proficiency will the completion of such a program achieve?
2. How can elementary school foreign language instruction be sequenced with the secondary school instruction to ensure an articulated program that does not result in repetitious presentations and yet allows for mastery of the language and entry into the program?
3. How can the goals for global education be integrated into the entire school curriculum?
4. How much will such a program cost in terms of time and additional personnel?

Imperative to answering these questions are the findings that would result from a controlled pilot program begun in a setting where students, teachers, and parents are open to such a program.

For many school districts in the United States that do not have opportunities for interaction with native speakers of a foreign language, an approach to the teaching of foreign languages that seems to make sense is one which integrates foreign language learning, concept development, and cross-cultural understanding as integral parts of the program. Through such a program, learning would be extended from other content areas through a system of questioning in the students' native language and also through the use of structures in the foreign language. Thus it is possible to expand children's understanding of language in many ways: language as a system, the family of languages, alphabets and their relationships to languages, the evolution of languages, language as a transmitter of the culture, language as a literary device.

Implicit in the goals of a F.L.A.G. program is the understanding of the aspects of language mentioned above. Most language teachers do, coincidentally, develop and extend the students' concepts of what language is and its importance. A F.L.A.G. program, however, does not leave such instruction to chance and serendipitous inspiration. Moreover, con-

cept development need not be limited to an understanding of language only but can also be extended into other content areas.

## Foreign Language Arts in the Grades: A Conceptual Approach

One of the primary goals of F.L.A.G. is to develop concepts. The question "What is a concept?" has been answered in many ways. According to Webster, a concept is "something conceived in the mind; a general or abstract idea; a universal notion; the resultant of a generalizing mental operation . . ."[7] Jarvis sees a concept as a category.[8] Indeed, one definition of "category" is "an ultimate concept or form of thought: one of the primary fundamental conceptions to which all knowledge can be reduced."[9]

How can a teacher aid in the process of concept development? In trying to answer this question, consider how Vincent Arnone describes concepts.

> An individual's own way of acquiring meaning from his experiences and which continually changes as his experiences accumulate.
> An abstraction or generalization in the mind of a person used to represent a class or group of things.
> A synthesis of a number of events an individual has experienced and conclusions he has drawn about his experiences.[10]

Teachers can aid in the development of concepts by providing opportunities for thinking that lead children to reorganize their experiences, to abstract generalizations from facts and information, and to share in the varied experiences of their classmates, thereby broadening the experiences on which they build their concepts.

Why is concept development important? Concepts aid in the transfer of learning, help in comprehension, aid in communication of information to others, and promote recall.[11]

For these authors, concept development means the process of generalizing, i.e., creating abstract categories. The teacher helps this generalizing process through carefully constructed questions in the native language, which lead the children through a process of discovery. This process of inquiry relates both to the language structures being learned and to concepts being developed from other subject areas. Both *broad* and *narrow*

questions are essential to the process of discovery. A description of both broad and narrow questions appear in the notes, and examples for the F.L.A.G. concept: "What is Language?" are given.[12]

## Planning a F.L.A.G. Curriculum

Jenny, a fifth grader, asked her teacher, "How do you decide what we're going to do in class?" This question is basic to curriculum planning. Historically, foreign language programs in the elementary school have been the product of various kinds of curricula: vocabulary words, dialogues, songs, proverbs, pictures and other realia, festivals, and so on. Frequently the answer to Jenny's question is that this planning has been on a week-to-week or day-to-day basis or has been, at times, a spur-of-the-moment decision.

Good curriculum planning is an ongoing process, with continuous evaluation and revision of goals. Long-term goals give direction to curriculum planners; they must also reflect the needs of today's children who face an uncertain future in a rapidly changing world. The following guiding principles are essential in determining F.L.A.G. program goals that may be implemented in measurable ways.

- Knowledge of child growth and development and of how children talk
- Interests of the children
- Thinking that begins with the child's "here and now" and is extended
- The building of new information on concepts already begun in the elementary program, but introduced no less than a year ago
- Integration of the foreign language program into the elementary classroom curriculum
- Community resources
- Utilization of the calendar year of the local community and of areas where the second language is spoken

A curriculum that has as its goals a conceptual approach to foreign language learning in the elementary schools involves decisions in the following seven areas: selection of concepts, long-term goals for concepts and language proficiency, relationships of concepts to children's world,

development of minimal objectives for language proficiency and concept development, utilization of resources and materials, evaluation techniques, and sequencing and articulation. These areas have been phrased in question form to aid steps in curriculum planning. Examples of answers to be found in the F.L.A.G. materials are provided in each case as illustrations.[13]

1. What concepts seem appropriate to be developed as part of the curriculum in this particular school?

   Examples: What is language?
   What are numbers?
   What is nutrition?
   What is an alphabet?

   Selection of concepts to be included in the foreign language program will be influenced by student interests, past experiences, and the curriculum content in other subject areas. In other words, what students are learning during the rest of their school day can be extended through concept development in the foreign language class.
2. What are appropriate long-term goals for each concept and for foreign language proficiency?

   Examples from the concept, "What is Language?": By the end of a three-year program in French, each child will . . .
   - be able to communicate emotions, opinions, ideas, judgments, preferences, desires, and values in the foreign language *within the limitations of the structure studied.*
   - show an awareness of the diverse ways of communicating similar feelings and ideas, and of their arbitrary nature.
   - be able to discuss contributions of diverse cultures and languages which have influenced language and culture of the United States today.
3. In what ways is each of these concepts related to the children's world?

   Examples from the concept "What are numbers?":

   Children's uses of numbers seem to fall into the following categories.

| *Numbers that name* | *Measurement* | *Time* |
|---|---|---|
| Counting | Distance | Telling time |
| Calendar | Height | Calendars |
| Addresses | Weight | Dateline |
| Telephone numbers | Temperature | Time schedules |
| Arithmetic | Money | Age |
| Age | Quantity | |
| Money | | |

4. What are desirable minimal objectives—linguistic and cultural—within each concept development and within the language of children?

Each language has a relatively small core of basic structures that can be sequenced according to linguistic difficulty and situational needs. These core structures, all of which occur in children's daily language, then become minimal objectives for learning the foreign language.

For example, in F.L.A.G., any given structure may occur in several different concept developments. By way of illustration, a structure that probably would be among the first in French to be considered is . . .

*Qu'est-ce que c'est?* and the answers:
*C'est* *le . . . de* (name).
*la . . .*
*l' . . .*
*Ce sont les . . . de* (name).

The series of minimal objectives (linguistic) which would develop this structure could be as follows:
The learners will be able to . . .

- ask the question *Qu'est-ce que c'est?* and answer appropriately with

*C'est* *le . . . de* (name).
*la . . .*
*l' . . .*
or with
*Ce sont les . . . de* (name).

- distinguish aurally and orally among the numbers 0 through 20.
- recognize the sound *des* or *les* before the vowel sound.
- recognize aurally the plurals of *journal, animal, cheval.*
- recognize the common root *jour* in the French words *bonjour, journal, aujourd'hui, bonne journée,* and in the English words *journal, adjourn, journey.*

Some minimal objectives (cultural) that might be developed early in the learners' experience could include these examples from the concept: "What is language?":
The learners will be able to . . .

- demonstrate the French custom of shaking hands when saying *Bonjour,*_____, *Bonsoir,*_____, or *Au revoir,*_____.
- explain that there are several ways (verbal and nonverbal) that we use in English to greet and say good-bye to each other.

5. What resources and materials will aid the development of each concept?

Materials that are attractive and easily stored are valuable resources for any foreign language program. Many items can be made either by the teacher, parent groups, or students. Some examples from the F.L.A.G. concept "What are Numbers?":
To develop the numbers concept over a three-year period, the following items are useful for a French program:

- Calendars from francophone countries
- Money or play money from francophone countries
- Clocks with movable hands (24 hour)
- Globe (dateline shown)
- Flashcards of numbers, arithmetic problems
- Metric measure kit (Celsius thermometer, meter stick, metric tape measure, kilogram weighing instrument)
- Bus and/or train schedules
- Bingo cards
- Pocket charts for each classroom (day, date)

6. What evaluation instruments and techniques are appropriate for each concept development? F.L.A.G. examples:
   (a) Children need to feel that their learning is valued. Carefully planned tests can allow children to see their own progress; tests can provide a feeling of accomplishment and need not be

negative experiences. It is possible then that children will share the sentiments of Jenny and other fifth graders who listed tests among favorite activities in French class.

(b) It is important to test in the same way and with the same vocabulary that the teacher has presented or practiced the material. If different techniques are introduced in an evaluation session, it is possible that the new process may interfere with an accurate evaluation of the children's responses.

Both formative evaluation (i.e., tasks to be performed *during* the learning process) and summative evaluation (i.e., tasks to be performed at the completion of an instructional unit) are important sources of information to help the teacher make decisions about subsequent learning activities.

It is valuable to have a formalized testing time on a regularly scheduled basis. Some classroom activities that can be adapted for testing activities for elementary school children include:

(Examples from the concept "What are Numbers?: Telling Time")

(a) Drawing the hands of a clock on clock faces upon hearing the time given orally in the foreign language

(b) Deciding which statement (A, B, or C), given orally by the teacher, describes the time indicated on the clock face on the student test paper

(c) Saying what time it is in response to a visual stimulus

(d) Responding orally to a direct question in the foreign language, e.g., "What time is it?"

7. What can be done to ensure a carefully sequenced, articulated program?

One basis for sequencing in the F.L.A.G. program is through careful articulation of the structures being taught. The choice of vocabulary will vary from situation to situation, but the basic structures that serve as the minimal linguistic objectives of the language classroom are the key to language proficiency. These can be used in evaluation for minimal competency. When students are found to be lacking in minimal proficiency, it is possible to reteach the same basic structures in a new context in different vocabulary. A mastery of the basic language structures

will enable students to continue their foreign language study with confidence.

Fewer than 100 linguistic structures are sufficient to serve as the basis for a three-year elementary school program. It is important to emphasize that sequencing and mastery of these structures are the keys to linguistic proficiency.

Each learner's personal record of the structures he or she has mastered enables teachers and administrators to assess realistically the level of mastery a child has attained.

Figure 1 shows a micro-example of sequencing that takes into account language difficulty, pupil readiness, and previous learning. Note that all four skills are *not* developed simultaneously. Also, these are for one of the concepts and are not the only structures included in the F.L.A.G. program for these grades.

## Elementary School Foreign Language Teacher Qualifications

Ideally, all elementary school foreign language teachers will be trained elementary school teachers and will be reasonably proficient speakers of the language being taught. The full cooperation of the classroom teacher both in planning curriculum and scheduling classes is a factor that can contribute to the successful integration of the foreign language program into the total school curriculum. Not only can foreign language instruction complement the learning taking place in other subject areas, but also the in-class teacher can extend and/or review learning begun in the foreign language class. Time allocated for a team approach between the various staff members who have contact with children—administrators, in-class teachers, PE teacher, art teacher, music teacher, reading specialist, librarian, foreign language teacher—can result in a richer overall program to the benefit of all involved.

The classroom teacher's involvement in the students' process of learning the foreign language can contribute positively to the success of a "core" program. A team effort between the classroom teacher and the foreign language teacher will maximize opportunities for children to pursue individual interests at their own ability level.

**Figure 1**
Minimal Objectives by Grade Level: Using Numbers in French (excerpt)

| *Fourth Grade* | *Fifth Grade* | *Sixth Grade* |
|---|---|---|
| (A,O)* Numbers 1 to 100. | (A,O) Numbers 101 to 1000. | |
| (A,O) Quel âge as-tu?<br>Quel âge a-t-il?<br>Quel âge a-t-elle? | (A,O) Quelle est ton adresse? | |
| (A,O) J'ai____ans.<br>Il a____ans. | (A,O) ____Main St.,<br>Columbus, 43229. | |
| | (A,O) Quel est ton numéro de téléphone? | |
| | (A,O) 389.09.57. | |
| (A) Quel jour est-ce? | (A,O) Quel jour est-ce? | (A,O) Quel jour est-ce aujourd'hui? |
| (A,O) Jeudi, le 14 juillet. | (A,O) C'est jeudi, le 14 juillet. | |
| (A) Quel jour est ton anniversaire? | | (A,O) C'est aujourd'hui le 14 juillet. |
| (A,O) Jeudi, le 20 août. | | |
| (A,O) Qu'est-ce que c'est? | | |
| (A,O) C'est____franc(s). | | |
| (A) C'est combien? | | |
| (A,O) ____franc(s). | | |
| (A) Quelle heure est-il? | (A,O) Quelle heure est-il? | (A,O,R) Quelle heure est-il? |
| (A,O) Il est____heure(s). (whole hours) | (A,O) Il est____heure(s). (all times) | (A,O,R) Il est ____ heure(s)____. (all times) |
| | | (A) Il est____ h. |
| | | (A,O) A quelle heure est____? |
| | | (A,O) A____heure(s). |
| | | (A,O) A quelle heure ____-tu? |
| | | (A,O) A____heure(s). |
| (A) Combien de____y a-t-il? | (A,O) Combien de____y a-t-il? | |
| (A,0) ____. (number) | (A,O) Il y en a____. | |
| (A) Combien font____ et____? | (A,O) Combien font____ et____? | |
| (A,O) ____. (any number from 1 to 100) | (A,O) ____et____font____. ( any number from 1 to 1000) | |

*A - Aural, 0 - Oral, R - Reading, W - Writing.

## The Challenge

The schools of today are educating students who will live most of their lives after the year 2000. The role of foreign language instruction can play an integral part in preparing students to be flexible, adaptable, problem-solving, humane individuals who can communicate well with those in their world, regardless of the nature of the expanding universe. So that students may grow into secure, mature thinkers in a multiethnic society, ready to accept the responsibilities of world citizenship, it is imperative that the nation's schools institute carefully planned programs of foreign language instruction with goals of linguistic proficiency and "global" understanding. An interdisciplinary approach combining the efforts and talents of the teachers of our schools at the elementary, secondary, and university levels can lead to these ends.

It's an exciting challenge!

### Notes

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7. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (Springfield, Massachusetts: G. and C. Merriam Company, Publishers, 1971).
8. The authors owe a debt of gratitude to Gilbert A. Jarvis, who, in an informal discussion, succinctly described a "concept as a category." Verification of the word "category" was found in Webster's Dictionary.
9. *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, Massachusetts: G. and C. Merriam and Company, Publishers, 1956).
10. Vincent C. Arnone, "The Nature of Concepts: Point of View," *Theory into Practice*, Vol. 10, No. 2, Jack R. Frymier, Ed. (Columbus, Ohio: The College of Education. The Ohio State University, 1971).
11. Ibid.
12. The kinds of questions used to aid in concept development are key to the F.L.A.G. program. Roger Cunningham in "Developing question-asking skills," *Developing Teacher Competencies*, James E. Weigand, Ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1971) has classified the questions that are asked in a classroom into two major categories: broad and narrow questions. *Narrow questions* have a fixed number of predictable "right" answers; *broad questions* elicit a variety of acceptable responses, many of which are not always predictable. According to Cunningham,

narrow questions help students gather an information base in order to explain relationships and make comparisons and contrasts; broad questions encourage learners to predict, hypothesize, infer, judge, value, justify a choice, or defend a position. Narrow and broad questions are essential to the process of concept development. In developing the concept "What is language?" the following narrow questions could be used:

(a) What states now have large settlements of American citizens who speak French as a native language? Who speak Spanish as a native language?
(b) What are some of the Native American (Indian) languages? How many people are there whose native language is one of these? Do you know of any states where radio programming involves one of these languages?
(c) Who are some of the people that have immigrated most recently to the United States? For what reasons did these people come?

The following are examples of appropriate broad questions:

(a) For a long time the United States was known as a "melting pot." This meant that the immigrants to this country abandoned their native languages in order to speak English and tried to conform to the English-speaking society. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a "melting pot"?
(b) What are alternatives to a "melting pot"?
(c) Imagine you are someone from another country and you do not speak any English. If you visited this country and met a U.S. citizen who could talk to you in your own language, how would you feel?

13. Woodruff et al.

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# 10
# Teaching Foreign Language in Style:
## Identifying and Accommodating Learner Needs

**Robert L. Ballinger**
Worthington High School, Worthington, Ohio

**Virginia S. Ballinger**
Upper Arlington High School, Upper Arlington, Ohio

Many teachers endorse individualized instruction. However, they are baffled by the implementation process. How do you individualize when you have over 100 students a day, teach several different levels, and have a wide assortment of learner needs? The purpose of this paper is to present a blueprint to show how teachers can begin to build a program where individual needs are met. This program is based on diagnosing student learning styles and developing materials and activities based on learner needs.

### Diagnosing Student Learning Styles

Although several instruments for identifying a student's learning style exist,[1] the authors use the Learning Style Inventory,[2] which is a series of 100 statements about how people learn. The inventory identifies thirty-two factors, which are arranged into four stimuli groups: (1) the environmental factors, which refer to the effect that sound, lighting, temperature, and room design have on learning; (2) the emotional factors, which identify the degree motivation, persistence, responsibility, and the structure of the course content influence learning; (3) the sociological factors, which point out the significant interpersonal relationships found in a student's learning style; and (4) the physical factors, which identify the student's

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perceptual strengths, need for food intake and for mobility, and time during the day for optimal learning. When the results of the inventory are completed, the teacher is given a printout of the factors that characterize each student's learning style. The first time we inventoried our students, we had two reactions: (1) we were amazed to find that in each class no two students had exactly the same learning style, and (2) we were overwhelmed to find that students had as many as fourteen factors important to their learning styles. With such diversity in each class, how can a teacher hope to meet all of these learner needs?

## The Starting Point

Along with the printout of each student's learning style is a class composite that lists the percentage of the class possessing each learning style factor. These percentages are important for determining a teacher's instructional strategy. For example, we had one class where 67% of the students needed mobility. It would not be realistic to expect these students to sit motionless for 54 minutes of a teacher's lecture. Eighty-six percent of another class preferred to work individually. We planned only a few group activities for them. Three French III classes were 100% adult motivated. Notes to parents were very effective, especially in praise of good performance. At times, this information is helpful in explaining why certain strategies do not work, as with a Spanish II class where only 35% of the students were teacher-motivated. These percentages help identify the most pressing needs of the class as a whole.

In addition, there are three groups of factors that tend to be most critical to learning: (1) the perceptual factors (visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic); (2) the sociological factors; and (3) the need for structured course content. For example, in French III classes, based on the information provided through the Learning Style Inventory, students needed highly structured course materials. Therefore, materials were developed with clear student objectives, a program calendar for each twenty-day unit, structured activities (such as team learning) for each objective, and frequent evaluation. Once materials for a class have been developed, they are kept ready to use the following year, since there is a high probability that students will need those materials in the future. But because those materials are completed, the teacher is then free to develop materials aimed at the next most important learner need.

### *Case study: Todd*

Todd is a fifteen-year-old Spanish I student. Todd listens to the explanation of the forms of *-ar* verbs and practices the exercises orally with the class. He needs to hear parts of the explanation again, but he senses that the rest of the class understands the lesson. Therefore, he is reluctant to take up time in class to ask further questions. After class, he asks the teacher if there is an explanation in the textbook so that he can read it for himself. He tells the teacher that when the explanation is illustrated by examples written on the board or projected on the screen he understands much better. The teacher recalls that Todd has taken responsibility to come in after school for extra help.

Based on Todd's learning style printout, the teacher finds out that Todd likes to learn alone. He prefers to read the explanation for himself and he learns more if he can isolate himself from the rest of the class. Todd needs structure and likes to know exactly what is to be learned. He is a responsible student and shows persistence. Todd learns best if he can see illustrations or diagrams. He is a visual learner.

The best prescription for Todd is a programmed learning sequence. Programs are used independently and, because they present only one item at a time, are highly structured. Programs are ideal for students who exhibit responsibility and are persistent enough to continue through the program. Because the student reads the information on each frame, the program is ideally suited to a visual learner. Todd needs time to read the explanation and to reread it if necessary. The programmed learning sequence allows Todd to work at his own speed and reread as many times as necessary in order to absorb the material.

### *Case study: Elaine*

Elaine is a sixteen-year-old French II student who feels frustrated by the teacher-centered classroom routine. She understands the explanations after the first or second time she hears them, but is bored after the fourth time. She wants to learn more. In fact, Elaine acts on the slightest suggestion given by her teacher. For example, she often checks out books on contemporary France, writes to a French pen pal, and attends a series of French films presented at a local college. In class, however, Elaine thinks that she is wasting her time with the needless repetition of concepts she has already learned well.

Elaine prefers to work alone since she feels held back by the other students' inability to learn as quickly as she does. The teacher is a powerful motivator for Elaine, who thrives on the recognition she receives. She is persistent and responsible. Little external structure needs to be imposed upon her. Elaine possesses auditory and perceptual strengths.

A contract activity package (CAP) is best suited for students like Elaine. In the sample (Figure 1), Elaine is presented with three objectives, all dealing with France during the nineteenth century. She then chooses one activity from those suggested or an activity of her own, as long as it pertains to the objective. The activity is not busywork to be dispatched with as quickly as possible. Elaine learns as she works on the objectives. She is free to complete the activity with as much detail as her ability and

**Figure 1**
Sample Contract Activity Package

*Objective 1: Political life in France in the 19th century*

A. What different forms of government existed in France in the 19th century?
B. What were the consequences of each form of government?
C. What were the dates of each form of government?

| *Activity Alternatives* | *Reporting Alternatives* |
|---|---|
| 1. Make a poster that will include a time line of the 19th century, the leaders and types of government that existed, and what resulted because of each government. | 1. Mount the poster in our room and answer any questions your classmates or teacher may ask. |
| 2. Draw a "movie" showing each form of government (leader, events, things, dates, etc.). | 2. Show your "movie" to a group of 3-4 classmates and teacher, and answer any questions they may have. |
| 3. Make an audio cassette explaining each form of government (who was its leader, what was its effect on France). | 3. Play the cassette to a group of 3-4 of your classmates and your teacher, and answer any questions they may have. |
| 4. Make a board game using the information about 19th century politics in France (dates, leaders, events, etc.). | 4. Have a group of 3-4 students play the game. |

5. If you can think of an activity that you would prefer to the ones listed above, write it on a piece of paper and show it to your teacher for possible approval.

5. If your original activity is approved, develop a reporting alternative that complements (matches) it.

*Resources*
1. *Trésors du temps*, pp. 244-249, 252
2. *Un Coup d'œil sur la France*, pp. 84-86
3. List any resources that were helpful to you to do this objective.

*Objective 2: Progress in France during the 19th century*

A. What machines were developed during the 19th century in France and what were their effects on French life?
B. What architectural changes took place in France during the 19th century?
C. What scientific advances were developed by the French in the 19th century?

| *Activity Alternatives* | *Reporting Alternatives* |
|---|---|
| 1. Make an audio cassette radio program reporting the important advances in science, architecture, and machinery in France during the 19th century. | 1. Play the cassette for a group of 3-4 of your classmates and your teacher, and answer any questions they may ask you. |
| 2. Set up a display of pictures and three-dimensional models showing the major advances in science, architecture, and machinery, and make an audio cassette explaining the significance of each item in the display. | 2. Set up your display in our room and play the cassette for a group of 3-4 of your classmates and your teacher, and answer any questions they may have. |
| 3. Make a scrapbook of pictures showing important scientific, architectural, and mechanical advances in France during the 19th century. | 3. Show your scrapbook to a group of 3-4 of your classmates and your teacher, and answer any questions they may ask you. |
| 4. If you can think of an activity that you would prefer to the ones listed above, write it on a piece of paper and show it to your teacher for possible approval. | 4. If your original activity is approved, develop a reporting alternative that complements (matches) it. |

*Resources*
1. *Trésors du temps*, pp. 250-253
2. *Un Coup d'œil sur la France*, p. 85
3. List any resources that were helpful to you to do this objective.

*Objective 3: French literature during the 19th century*

A. What are the distinguishing characteristics of romanticism, realism, and symbolism?

B. What were French poems, plays, or short stories like in the 19th century?

| *Activity Alternatives* | *Reporting Alternatives* |
|---|---|
| for A: 1. Make an audio cassette explaining the differences between romanticism, realism, and symbolism using excerpts from French poems, plays, and short stories of the 19th century. | 1. Play the cassette for a group of 3-4 students and your teacher and answer any questions they may have. |
| for A: 2. Make a poster showing the characteristics of romanticism and symbolism, and giving examples of those characteristics from 19th century French plays, poems, and short stories. | 2. Mount the poster in our classroom and answer any questions your classmates and teacher may have. |
| for B: 3. Do a poetry reading of three (3) 19th century French poems on an audio cassette. (Extra credit if you memorize "Après la bataille" by Hugo.) | 3. Play your cassette for 3-4 of your classmates and your teacher and answer any questions they have about the poems. (If you memorized "Après la bataille," recite it for 3-4 of your friends and your teacher.) |
| for B: 4. With the help of another student, act out the excerpt of "A quoi rêvent les jeunes filles?" in *Trésors du temps*, pp. 256-258. | 4. Present this excerpt to a group of 3-4 classmates. (Extra credit if it is memorized.) |
| for B: 5. Do a dramatic reading of "La parure" on an audio cassette. | 5. Play the cassette for 3-4 of your classmates and your teacher and answer any questions they have about the reading. |
| 6. If you can think of an activity that you would prefer to the ones listed above, write it on a piece of paper and show it to your teacher for possible approval. | 6. If your original activity is approved, develop a reporting alternative that complements (matches) it. |

*Resources*

1. *Trésors du temps*, pp. 254-262
2. Audio cassettes of the literature in *Trésors du temps*, pp. 254-262
3. List any resources that were helpful to you to do this objective.

interest inspire her. The result of the activity is a finished product that she can share with her teacher and her fellow students. She not only feels pride in presenting her project, but she also reinforces what she has learned. The project, in turn, becomes a resource for enriching the other students.

### *Case study: Bill*

Bill is a seventeen-year-old French III student. In class, he listens attentively to the teacher's presentations, but is reluctant to ask questions for fear of embarrassing himself in front of the other younger students. Often he is not sure of the important points the teacher is trying to present. Bill has two friends who are in another French III class and with whom he studies, especially when a quiz or a test is coming up. While studying together, Bill's friends tend to drift off the subject. Bill finds himself frequently steering them back to the task at hand. He knows that if he does not get his friends' help, he probably will not be prepared for the test. So, to keep them on track, Bill lines up the topics he knows he needs to practice.

According to Bill's printout of his learning style characteristics, he is self-motivated, persistent, and responsible. Bill also needs the course content structured; that is, he needs clear-cut objectives and a step-by-step plan for achieving those objectives. He works well with peers with whom he can comfortably ask questions with little risk to his self-concept. His mind is stimulated by the give-and-take of a group effort searching to solve a problem. Since Bill has visual and tactile strengths, he increases his comprehension by writing notes and drawing charts that summarize what he is trying to learn.

An instructional program we have found helpful for students like Bill is team learning. The sample shown in Figure 2 has for objectives the comprehension of the Romans' influence on French history, as well as the learning of the selected vocabulary from the reading passage. The content is structured to help the student focus on the important concepts relating to the Roman influence on France. At the same time, the student is aware of the vocabulary that he or she is expected to learn throughout the reading selection. A team of three to five students works together sharing and pooling their talents to learn the objectives. This approach works well even with a heterogeneous group wherein poorer students can witness the

**Figure 2**
Team Learning

**Apprentissage par équipe** **Leçon 2** Date:_____

Membres de l'équipe: 1)_____ 2)_____

3)_____ 4)_____

Secrétaire:_____

Objectif 1-a: Les Grecs et les Romains viennent en France
Ressources: *Trésors du Temps*, pp. 18-19; *Voyage en France*, p. 155 (photo 52-53); la carte, p. 121

**La Gaule**

1. Comment la France s'appelait-elle quand les Romains sont arrivés?_____
2. Qui étaient les Gaulois?
   _____
3. En quelle année et à partir de quel événement date-t-on le début de l'histoire de France?
   _____

**Les Grecs en France**

4. Qui a fondé Massilia? Quand?
   _____
5. Comment Massilia s'appelle-t-elle aujourd'hui?
   _____
6. Pourquoi Marseille est-elle importante aujourd'hui?
   a) _____
   b) _____
7. Où se trouve Massilia? (sur quelle mer et sur quel fleuve)_____
8. Pourquoi la possession de Massilia était-elle importante pour les Grecs?_____
   _____
9. Pourquoi les Grecs et les Romains allaient-ils en Angleterre?_____
10. Comment et en quelle année les habitants sont-ils devenus Romains?
    a) _____
    b) _____

**Les Romains en France**

11. Pourquoi les Gaulois ont-ils attaqué Massilia?_____
    _____
12. Pourquoi les Romains sont-ils venus en France?
    _____

**Vocabulaire**

- ° a country
- ° covered with
- # inhabited
- + a tribe
- + a beginning
- ° B.C.
- # oldest
- ° a century
- + to found
- # biggest
- + to allow
- + a length
- ° by which
- + to prosper
- + an inhabitant
- ° to become
- ° since
- ° conquered
- + to attack
- + a reaction
- + constantly
- + a territory
- ° to surround
- ° full of
- ° to hold
- # then
- + to appeal
- # not only
- ° to save
- + attached
- ° Roman (*adj.*)

13. Qui a conduit l'armée romaine en France à l'appel des habitants de Massilia?_____
14. Que fait Jules César après avoir sauvé Massilia?

_____

**La Provence**

15. Expliquez l'origine du nom "Provence".

_____

16. Dessinez une carte qui montre la Provence et ses frontières à l'ouest, au sud et à l'est.

**Vocabulaire**

17. Apprenez les nouveaux mots (°), les mots semblables (+) et les mots (#) que vous avez étudiés avant cette leçon.

better students model good study skills. Better students profit from the chance to clarify their own thinking as they explain certain points to the other students. The team learning activity is designed to include questions and activities that every student in the group can successfully answer or complete. These peer-oriented students can pursue questions that occur to them in a low-risk situation.

## Conclusion

Clearly these case studies do not describe all the types of learners we have in our foreign language classes. It must be emphasized that any given instructional approach will not work with every student. Methods must be designed with specific learner needs in mind. If the individual student's learning style is identified and if that student is furnished with an instructional program developed to meet his or her specific learner needs, then learning is likely to take place.

### Notes

1. Helen S. Lepke, "Assessing Individual Learning Styles: An Analysis of Five Instruments," *Foreign Language Annals* 11 (1978), pp. 657-668.
2. Rita and Kenneth Dunn, *Teaching Students Through Their Individual Learning Styles: A Practical Approach* (Reston, Virginia: Reston Publishing Company, 1978), pp. 401-404.

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# 11
# The Foreign Language Newsletter:
## Function, Value, and Techniques

**Wynona H. Wilkins**
**University of North Dakota, Grand Forks**

The function of a newsletter for foreign language teachers and administrators is to serve as a cohesive force for its readers within a geographic or language area by discussing their concerns and by bringing them items of timely interest. In these difficult times when financial cutbacks threaten the very existence of foreign language programs in many parts of the country, the newsletter should assume an even more important role by voicing common concerns and serving as a forum for political information and action.

The term "newsletter" covers a great many types of publications and allows for considerable variation in format, contents, and sponsoring group. Bulletins from national organizations such as ERIC, ACTFL, and the AATs fall into this category. Some publishers periodically send out news releases describing new books and audiovisual products available in the field. Local school districts sometimes produce their own publications—West Hartford, Connecticut, for example, has an excellent one. The majority come from the state foreign language associations. With the variety and number that appear, every foreign language teacher and administrator in the nation should be on at least one mailing list.

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An editor, whether experienced or novice, must constantly review and revise the publication's policies and objectives to keep them in step with changing needs and developments. Here is a list of topics for consideration and some suggestions for their implementation.

I. Objectives
   a. General purpose of the newsletter

b. Requirements of readers. Do you target your materials to the teaching levels and the special regional needs of your audience?

2. Contents—source and kind of materials included
   a. Reprints from ERIC, ACTFL, etc. Do you reprint them as they come or do you edit them?
   b. Material from other journals, newspapers, and magazines. Do you have a section for national and international stories or do you use them as the need arises? How do you deal with the problem of plagiarism?
   c. Original material—editorials and contributions from readers. Do you have regular correspondents or sectional editors?
   d. Announcements of local and regional interest
   e. Table of contents and masthead
   f. Materials for classroom or extracurricular use—games, puzzles, suggestions for special activities such as Foreign Language Week, Oktoberfest, etc.
   g. Illustrations, drawings, photographs
   h. Advertising. Do you accept advertisements? If so, do you screen them or take any and all? How do you set rates?
3. Production
   a. Preparation of copy—appearance, heads, typeface, arrangement of contents
   b. Physical format: folded, reduced type, standard page size
   c. Number of issues per year and copies per issue
   d. Timetable and deadlines
   e. Funding—dues, subscriptions, state agencies, ads, other
   f. Volunteer or paid help
   g. Mailing lists—source and updating
   h. Bulk mailing—zip codes, loss, tearing, returns

## Objectives

All foreign language teachers in the nation share common professional concerns and interests, but each region has special needs and problems of its own. The editor must therefore look carefully at both aspects when deciding on objectives and methods of selecting and presenting materials. The objectives of an editor in New York or Southern California should

differ at least in part from those of one in Wyoming, Mississippi, or North Dakota.

Let us use North Dakota to illustrate this point. In addition to the universal problem of financial cutbacks and the constant struggle of teachers to upgrade themselves, the state has geographical difficulties unknown in many other parts of the nation. It is as big as New England and New Jersey combined, with a total population of less than that of one medium-sized American city—about 625,000. There are only 150 foreign language teachers in the entire state, many of whom teach a language as a second subject, often in isolated communities cut off from frequent personal contact with fellow foreign language teachers, especially in winter. They get together twice a year—in autumn and in spring—but, because of distance, two time zones, and the escalating cost of travel, it is hard to organize statewide student conventions and social get-togethers. And in winter, it can be downright dangerous. Morale becomes a serious problem. Some means of communication with and among those teachers is more than merely useful—it is vital. Moreover, the state newsletter (FLAND *News*) is probably the only news source on foreign language developments that most teachers receive, since only a very small fraction of them belong to national organizations.

## Contents

It follows that the newsletter's contents must be measured with the same yardsticks as its objectives. They should include materials selected to appeal to teachers at all levels, from FLES to college and university, with considerable space devoted to classroom how-to's and suggestions for improving teacher methods. But don't stop there. A publication that confines itself to mere methodology and classroom news performs only half its function. Look for news items gathered from sources that the readers might not have seen elsewhere. Find space for notices of interesting books and films; announcements of meetings, workshops, summer programs, and other special activities; and presentation and discussion of national issues and developments that affect the profession.

The editor will probably be deluged with printed matter from all sides, and this raises a number of questions. How much should you reprint and from what sources? Should you accept every handout or should you

have a screening policy? If you print everything that crosses your desk, your newsletter will be filled with junk. This writer has never reprinted handouts or press releases in full. Most teachers are too busy to read three or four pages of somebody's speech or publicity handout. A paragraph summary will do the job equally well or even better, and if anyone wants to read the original in full, the citation (name and date of publication) will make it easy to find. In some instances we have offered to send out copies of the text of talks and proceedings of conferences on receipt of a self-addressed envelope.

Do not be parochial in selecting news items. Teachers and administrators need to know what is happening outside their own community. Those in large metropolitan centers will obviously have access to a greater variety of news sources than those in small towns in rural states. This writer has always made a special effort to include items from the British Broadcasting Corporation, Radio Nederland, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, as well as from nationally circulated newspapers such as the *New York Times*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Washington Post*, to name a few. These papers often have stories or editorials which, while not directly concerned with the teaching of foreign language, serve to enrich classroom materials. How do you find them? Arrange to pick up the discards from the public library. Your house, office, and car will be full of papers, but when you finish culling their treasures, the Boy Scouts or some other service agency will be glad to take them off your hands.

The use of borrowed material inevitably leads to the question of plagiarism. How much can one use of someone else's text without violating copyright laws? This is another good reason for summarizing rather than copying outright. Do not fail to give the origin and date of every excerpt or summary. And don't fail to name the contributor of submitted copy that you print. It may be assumed that unsigned articles and editorials are produced by the editor and/or staff, but attribution must be given for all contributed matter, even if it has been edited. Although most newsletters are not copyrighted, it is only common courtesy to acknowledge the use of someone else's story. It is extremely irritating to read one of your own creations in another newsletter, attributed not to you but to a third publication, which evidently neglected to give proper credit. A statement such as "Material may be reprinted if appropriate credit is

given" has no legal standing but may make the copier more careful to give the source.

Whether or not the editor wishes to write a regular or an occasional editorial or none at all is a personal matter. The inclusion of a table of contents will probably depend on the time element as well as the number of pages allotted to the issue. But on no account must the masthead be omitted. This is usually placed in a box at the bottom of a page and lists the name and address of the publication, editorial staff, sponsoring organization(s), information on submission of material, statement of permission to reprint, and disclaimer of responsibility.

The lifeblood of any newsletter is the news of local and regional events. These are extremely important to the foreign language program in small communities and of interest to readers all over the country because of the mosaic they provide of nationwide foreign language activities. The problem is getting them into print in time. It might help to send a list of guidelines, similar to the one below, to members of the state organization.

> The editor and staff of this newsletter want it to be *your* publication, but we can't do it without your help. We often miss interesting and worthwhile news items because nobody tells us about them. Here are some reminders of the kind of story or announcement we want:
>
> 1. Announcements of upcoming school or community foreign language activities—ethnic or folk festivals, seasonal celebrations, trips, workshops, summer opportunities, etc.
> 2. News of students or faculty—awards, trips, projects, etc.
> 3. Ideas and techniques you have developed that work for you and would interest others
> 4. Any clippings or quotations (with source) that you want to share with others.
>
> Deadlines are important. We don't like to leave out items that you have sent, but if they don't arrive before press time we have no alternative. Here are our deadlines:
>
> October issue: *Mid-September*. Why so early? Because you need to receive the newsletter at least ten days before the fall convention so that reservation coupons for housing and meals can be returned. We must allow two weeks for editorial work and one for printing and mailing. Sorry it's so close to the beginning of the term, but we have no choice.
>
> December issue: *Thanksgiving*. The deadline isn't as strict for this issue, but we want to get it mailed before the Christmas rush.
>
> March issue: *Mid-February*. Same schedule as for October because of the spring convention, usually in late March or early April.

Keep your stories brief and to the point.

The editor will probably have to edit most contributions because they are often wordy and disorganized, but the senders should always receive credit. They will probably be so delighted at seeing their name in print that they will not notice the omission of some passages.

Some newsletters use photographs, cartoons, or drawings, depending on the method of reproduction, the quality of work submitted, and the taste of the editor and staff. If there is a staff artist or if contributors submit suitable artwork, drawings can be used effectively but judiciously to break up pages of print. But take care in selecting graphics. Crude cartoons and drawings only serve to distract the reader from the intent of the text. Some editors go overboard and use three or four graphics to a page. Even if they are good, they give the page a "busy" look, which is also distracting. Magazines and other printed materials sometimes have usable illustrations, preferably line drawings without shading or heavy black areas.

Advertisements are another form of graphics, and whether or not to accept paid advertising is a thorny question. Most editors receive "camera-ready" ads from companies offering books, electronic equipment, student tours and exchange programs, candy, T-shirts, bumper stickers—almost anything even remotely connected with the study of foreign language. Some publications accept ads of narrow local interest from restaurants, beauty shops, and grocery stores. The decision of what to do about advertising must be made by the editor and the advisory body. If printing ads is the only way to finance the publication, there is no alternative. But there has to be some basis for judging the merit of the article or service advertised and the good taste of the ad itself. Setting rates is another problem, which each editor will have to solve individually. Some companies offer a fixed sum, but others are willing to negotiate the rate.

## Production

The appearance of a newsletter is no guarantee of its intrinsic merit, but an attractive format makes the reading audience more receptive to what it has to offer. The publication need not be a work of art, but it should be neat with a clear typeface, and its articles should be set off under easily read heads. Typographical errors can get by even the most careful proofreader, but effort should be made to eliminate them.

Selection of type style will depend on several factors: costs, availability of reproduction facilities, the time element (can the printing firm or the school word processing unit get your product out on time or is it bogged down with athletic programs, school newspapers, and the like?), and, if there is a choice, individual taste. Most work today is done by the offset process, but if necessary the old-style mimeograph or ditto machines will serve the purpose. The format can vary from tabloid size to the standard 8½″ x 11″ and, by reduction, to half that.

It is a good idea to establish a sequence for the contents and then stick to it. For example:

1. Table of contents (optional)
2. State news—conventions, agency releases, etc.
3. Local news—activities of various schools, announcements of upcoming events
4. News from each language area
5. Materials of interest to foreign language teachers—publications, films, kits, workshops, etc.
6. Announcements—summer courses, travel options, special programs
7. Book and film reviews
8. Editorial comments (optional)

Setting up a specific order has two advantages: it enables the editor to lay out materials and allot space in advance, and the busy teacher-reader will know immediately where to turn to find a desired item of interest without having to hunt through the entire issue, no matter how valuable the individual items may be in themselves.

The length of the publication, the number of issues per year, and the format will depend in great part on the time and money available to the editor and staff. Financing a publishing venture, difficult at the best of times, can become a nightmare in hard times, and a number of foreign language newsletters have disappeared as a result of financial hardship. Where can one get money for such a project? A state newsletter should get at least part of its funds from members' dues and subscriptions from nonmembers. Advertising has already been discussed. The state affiliate of NEA or some other educational organization or agency may

contribute, and if the editorial offices are located at a college or university, that institution may help with expenses and possibly with secretarial services.

Do not forget to include the cost of postage when making up the budget. More than 200 copies of a single issue can be sent at bulk rate, provided they are arranged in order of zip code, but allow extra time for delivery. Consult the post office first for information about eligibility for bulk mailing and the proper method of preparation. Watch for loose or insufficient staples because they cause copies to get caught and damaged or destroyed in automatic canceling machines. You pay twice when this happens-once for the ruined copy and again at a higher rate for the replacement. Using envelopes is safer but more costly.

One of the editor's biggest headaches is keeping the mailing list up-to-date. People retire and others change jobs with surprising frequency. This writer uses the following categories for making up the mailing list.

1. In-state
   a. Foreign language teachers at all levels
   b. Principals of all schools where foreign languages are taught
   c. University and college presidents, liberal arts deans
   d. Education editors of newspapers
   e. Retired foreign language teachers, some government personnel, other interested persons
2. Out-of-state
   a. Editors of all state foreign language newsletters (on an exchange basis—names and addresses can be found in *FL Annals*)
   b. ERIC, ACTFL, and the national AAT offices
   c. State foreign language supervisors (also from *FL Annals*)
   d. Anyone requesting copies

If you have to write addresses or type labels by hand, allow enough time for this irksome task or find some willing volunteers. The easiest way to do the job is to use stick-on labels prepared by computer, but these cost money, and you will still have to tear them apart and sort them by zip code.

## Conclusion

The preparation of a foreign language newsletter requires a great deal of time and energy from its editor and staff if it is to carry out its proper function. It should contain materials for classroom and extracurricular use that the teacher might not find elsewhere. It should record the activities of its readers and give them advance notice of events of interest. It should take cognizance of national and worldwide events and issues affecting members of the profession, but its most important function is to serve its own reading community, which has its own special needs.

Editing a newsletter is an exacting task but one which offers great satisfaction if the job is well done.

## Central States Conference Proceedings

Published annually in conjunction with the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

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